
Blue Hills

Neighborhood Plan



Applied Urban Research Institute

Blue Hills Neighborhood Plan

Prepared by

Applied Urban Research Institute
6314 Brookside Plaza, Suite 302
Kansas City, MO 64113
(816) 822-9659
www.aurikc.org

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to provide a framework for future development within the neighborhood and identify existing neighborhood problems and possible solutions. The objective of public participation planning is to integrate public policy, neighborhood residents' concerns, and neighborhood development potential in a comprehensive plan.

To bring this vision to reality, community leaders and residents of the Blue Hills Neighborhood have requested assistance in preparing a Blue Hills Neighborhood Plan that will become an adoptable public policy document to direct the future of the neighborhood. As a public policy document, this Neighborhood Plan will provide a guide for the City that is responsive to the desires of the residents of Blue Hills.

Boundaries

For the purpose of this neighborhood plan the boundaries of the Blue Hills Neighborhood have been established as:

- 47th/ Swope Parkway Street on the north
- 59th Steet/63rd Street on the south
- Prospect Avenue on the east
- The Paseo Boulevard on the west

Project Area

The Blue Hills Neighborhood is primarily a single-family residential area, with commercial/retail/office uses along the eastern and southern edge. Much of the existing housing remains in good condition, however those conditions can change dramatically from block to block.

Planning Participants

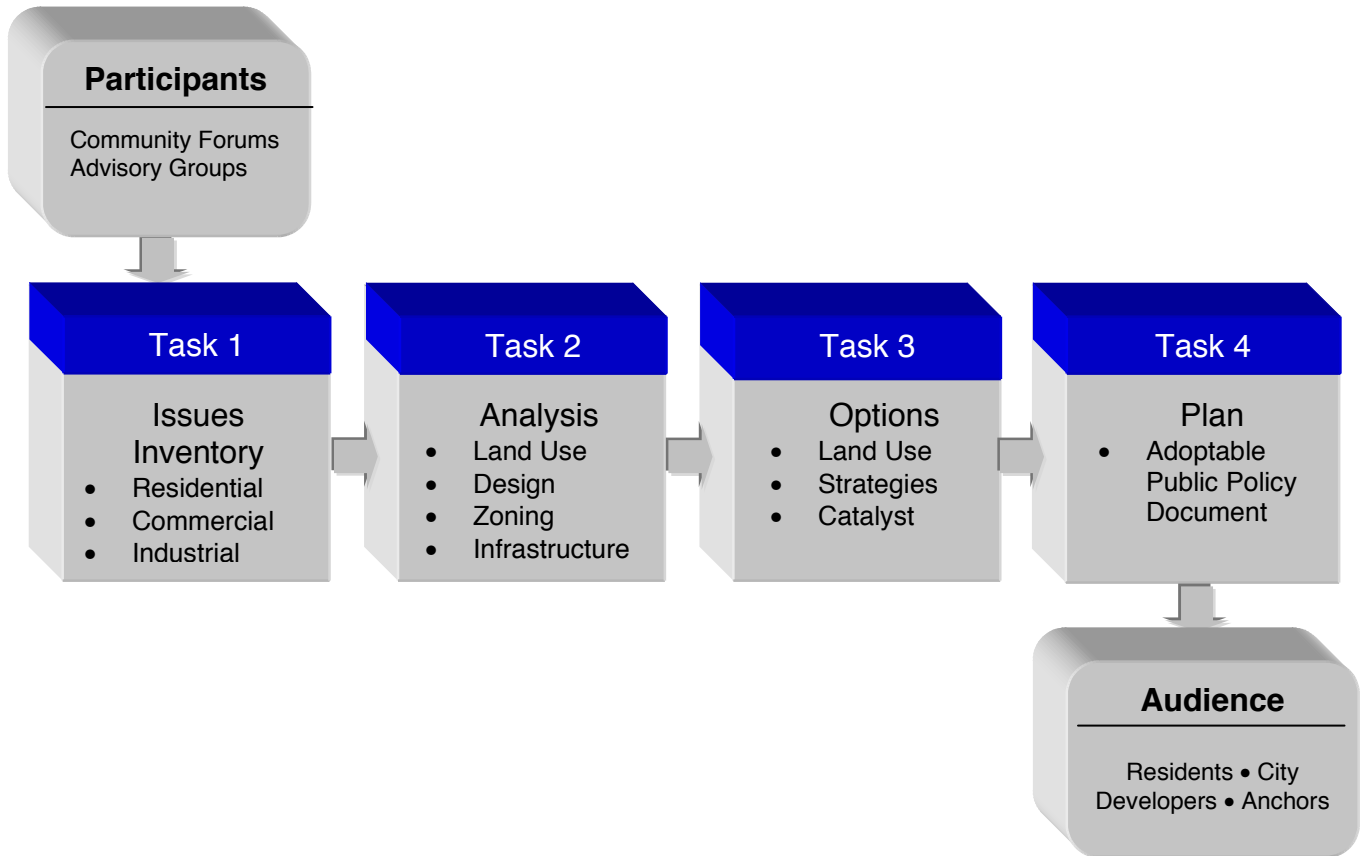
The Blue Hills Neighborhood Plan was prepared with the active participation of four groups:

- Blue Hills Neighborhood Association and Area Residents
- Applied Urban Research Institute
- Community Builders of Kansas City
- City of Kansas City, Missouri

Planning Process

The five-month planning process involves four main tasks, which includes the structured involvement of institutions and the community at large. *Task 1.0 Issues Inventory* identifies area concerns through a series of community forums, advisory group meetings and interviews with area stakeholders. *Task 2.0 Analysis* involves an assessment of current planning and development efforts, as well as a profile of existing

conditions. *Task 3.0 Options* considers existing plans and proposes feasible land uses. Public improvements and available resources for several target development areas. *Task 4.0 Neighborhood Plan* outlines specific development projects and actions by type characteristics, size, costs and benefits.



Plan Review

Existing city planning documents that set forth public policy, land use designations and other guidelines for the Blue Hills Neighborhood study area include the following:

- FOCUS Kansas City: *Building Blocks*
- FOCUS Component Plans
- Major Street Plan
- A Plan for Parks, Recreation, Boulevards and Greenways
- South Central Area Plan
- Southtown 2000 Policy Plan
- Brush Creek Corridor Land Use and Development Plan
- Brush Creek Corridor Tax Increment Financing Plan
- Southtown/31st Street Tax Increment Financing Plan
- 5300 Block of Highland to Woodland Urban Renewal Plan

Each of these documents is reviewed and presented in order from the broad, citywide perspective to the more focused, neighborhood-level applicability.

CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

The analysis of development factors in the Blue Hills neighborhood reinforces issues raised during the Community Forums. Blue Hills is a stabilizing neighborhood that offers quality affordable housing. The integrity of the housing stock combined with access to the transportation system and its location within the greater Kansas City area gives opportunity for continued development opportunities. Increasing pedestrian connections and infrastructure improvements in conjunction with reinforcement of the single-family character of Blue Hills would provide additional incentives for development.

People First: Demographics

The demographic analysis of the Blue Hills neighborhood illustrates that the neighborhood is below the Kansas City median in most areas. The population and number of households in Blue Hills declined from 1980 to 1990. While the population decline did slow from 1990 to 2001; the number of households declined even more significantly in that time period. The median income is 23% below that of the city as a whole; most notable differences occur at the highest and lowest income levels. Unemployment is more than double in Blue Hills compared to Kansas City. Stable factors from 1980 to 2001 have been race and age distribution.

Blue Hills FOCUS Neighborhood Assessment

The FOCUS Neighborhood Assessment of the Blue Hills neighborhood involved people from the neighborhood, City staff, area institutions and businesses. Through a charting process to list issues and goals, the participants identified themselves with a neighborhood type and defined strategies to improve the community. Priority issues identified by the Blue Hills residents during this process:

- Encourage residential participation in neighborhood and community projects
- Maintain and improve City services
- Promote business and economic development

Issues Inventory

Community Forums were held with the residents of the Blue Hills neighborhood. In planning sessions the Community Forum attendees discussed neighborhood and development issues relevant to the Blue Hills neighborhood. These issues were used as guides for the planning process that followed, emphasizing resident involvement as an intrinsic value of a neighborhood plan. Some of the key issues from the issues inventory are:

- Infrastructure improvements specifically for drainage issues
- Traffic control measures
- Increased connectivity between residents
- Preservation of single-family character of the community
- Appropriate commercial activity along Prospect Avenue

Neighborhood Livability

The dominant use of land in the Blue Hills Neighborhood is single-family residential, with a higher owner occupancy rate than the rest of the city as a whole. This is reflected in the existing land use, Current Adopted Land Use and current zoning. However, the existing land use as well as zoning on Prospect Avenue is not in compliance with the Current Adopted Land Use. Zoning within the Blue Hills neighborhood also reflects a higher density level than what is recommended by Current Adopted Land Use.

The Blue Hills Neighborhood has four sites designated as Historically Significant by the Landmarks Commission of the City of Kansas City, Missouri, as well as many older and architecturally significant properties that could be added to the Local Register of Historic Places. The housing stock ranges from large, mansion-style single family homes to smaller bungalow-style single family homes. The northeast section has views of downtown, the stadium complex, and the County Club Plaza. This provides opportunities and incentives for future development.

Choice in Transportation

The interior streets are primarily local streets that circulate traffic within the area and feed into secondary or primary arterials. Primary arterials include 63rd Street Trafficway, Swope Parkway, and The Paseo Boulevard. Secondary arterials include Prospect Avenue and 55th Street. Both Swope Parkway and The Paseo Boulevard are designated as parkways, and Swope Parkway is also classified as an expressway. In addition, the recently completed Bruce R. Watkins runs parallel to and just east of Prospect Avenue for 63rd Street to 51st Street to Swope Parkway. This roadway is classified as both a freeway and a Special Purpose Rapid Transit Corridor.

These major streets provide linkages to other parts of the city as well as access to the Blue Hills Neighborhood. However, Blue Hills is lacking linkages for pedestrian and bicycle traffic. These linkages would provide better circulation throughout the neighborhood, as well as better connections between community members.

Critical Resources

Drainage issues throughout the Blue Hills neighborhood are a deterrent to future development and a major concern to residents. Portions of Blue Hills are in 100-year and 500-year floodplains, with Town Fork Creek as the primary source of potential flooding. Blue Hills has a variety of topographic features that include steep slopes, limestone outcroppings, and ravines. The elevated topography in the northeastern section provides scenic views that could be an incentive for future development.

Safe City

The overall crime rate for the neighborhood has been decreasing over the past three years. Most significant decreases are in the instances of homicide, robbery, burglary, and larceny. Residents would like to see increased patrol of the vacant properties and the Blue Hills Park. Increased police patrol, code enforcement, targeted infill and rehabilitated housing could aid in decreasing real and perceived crime.

Business & Development

Four areas within the Blue Hills Neighborhood currently have economic development incentives in place. Those areas are Town Fork Creek Urban Renewal Plan, St. James Urban Renewal Plan, 5300 Block of Highland to Woodland Urban Renewal Plan, Southtown/ 31st and Baltimore Tax Increment Financing Plan. The dominant commercial activity in Blue Hills is along Prospect Avenue and 63rd Street. The neighborhood also has a small neighborhood retail center at 55th Street and Euclid Avenue. This site is currently underutilized. Kansas City Neighborhood Alliance has targeted the Blue Hills Neighborhood for a Neighborhood Preservation Initiative. This program rehabilitates properties for the purpose of increasing quality owner occupied housing. St. James Church located at 56th Street and The Paseo Boulevard is currently undergoing a expansion of their facilities.

Continued targeting of housing and commercial development, could aid the community in its efforts to stabilize the neighborhood. Development efforts should be targeted toward addressing the needs of the community.

OPTIONS

Sixteen potential projects arose from community meetings and on-site analysis of the Blue Hills neighborhood (see table on the next page). These projects have been explored in terms of rationale, schedule and funding. Residents and board members of the neighborhood will assist in prioritizing the projects, which will be developed further in Section 4.

#	Project Name	Type	Category
1	Northeast Blue Hills	Market rate housing	Livable Neighborhoods
2	Prospect Corridor	Low-density duplexes	Livable Neighborhoods
3	Central Blue Hills	Single-family, infill and rehab	Livable Neighborhoods
4	5300 Woodland	Single-family, infill	Livable Neighborhoods
5	The Paseo Boulevard	Single-family, new and rehab	Livable Neighborhoods
6	Brookwood Avenue	New entry	Livable Neighborhoods
7	Entry Markers	Identity, landscaping	Livable Neighborhoods
8	Zoning	Downzoning	Livable Neighborhoods
9	Historic Resources Survey	Inventory	Livable Neighborhoods
10	Pedestrian Trail	Recreation, connection	Choice in Transportation
11	Catch Basins	Infrastructure	Critical Resources
12	Blue Hills Park	Recreational amenities	Safe City
13	Traffic	Traffic control	Safe City
14	55 th & Euclid Retail	Rehab neighborhood retail	Business and Development
15	TIF Project "G"	Commercial, residential	Business and Development
16	Prospect Mixed Use Centers	Commercial	Business and Development

PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

The plan recommendations address the role of public policy guiding present and future development opportunities in the Blue Hills neighborhood.

The plan recommendations include policy recommendations by category, and a redevelopment framework that describes twelve prototype development projects, to illustrate urban design concepts as expression of the land use. Key public policy recommendations include:

Livable Neighborhoods
1. Land use and zoning designations should be consistent with the residential character of Blue Hills.
2. Zoning patterns should reflect appropriate land use designations.
3. Retain the single-family nature of the Blue Hills neighborhood through continued development of quality housing.
4. Support the preservation of historic properties and encourage development and renovation that is respectful of historic character.
5. Create enhanced entrances into the Blue Hill neighborhood.
Choice in Transportation
6. Increase the connectivity within the community through pedestrian/bicycle routes throughout Blue Hills.
Critical Resources
7. Establish a program for the efficient repair and maintenance of catch basins.
Safe City
8. Reinforce and stabilize Blue Hills Park.
9. Reinforce the secondary arterials and neighborhood streets as pedestrian friendly streets through traffic calming measures.
Business and Development
10. Support commercial development that is responsive to the needs and the character of the community.

These policy recommendations used in conjunction with the design guidelines provide a basis for future development that is compatible with the existing character of the neighborhood.

Twelve prototype development projects explored in the Options portion of the planning process have produced opportunities for combined public and private investment. The proposed projects and land uses are summarized in the next two pages.

#	Project Name	Type	Location		Land Use
1	Northeast Blue Hills	Market rate housing; rehab of existing housing	47 th Street/Swope Parkway to 50 th Street, The Paseo Boulevard to Wabash Avenue.		Low-density residential
2	Prospect Corridor	Med-density residential	49 th Street to 50 th Street, Wabash Avenue to Prospect Avenue		Medium density residential, with the exceptions of mixed-use nodes at 55 th , and from 59 th Street to the 63 rd Street Corridor
3	Central Blue Hills	Single-family, infill and rehab	49 th Street to 59 th Street, The Paseo Boulevard to Wabash Avenue		Low density residential
4	5300 Woodland	Single-family, infill	5300 Block of Highland Avenue to Woodland Avenue		Low density single-family residential
5	The Paseo Boulevard	Single-family, new and rehab; street alignment	51 st to 57 th Street along The Paseo Boulevard to Wayne/ Highland		Low-density residential, medium density residential
6	Brookwood Avenue	New Entry	Brookwood from Paseo to Michigan		N/A
7	Entry Markers	Identity, landscaping	Selected intersections along The Paseo and Prospect Avenue		N/A
8	Pedestrian Trail	Recreation, connection	47 th Street/Swope Parkway to 63 rd Street, along The Paseo Boulevard Park, Avenue, and Woodland Avenue		N/A

#	Project Name	Type	Location		Land Use
9	Blue Hills Park	Recreational amenities	Southern half of the 5100 block of Park Avenue to 53 rd Street, Brooklyn Avenue to on half block east of Park Avenue		Park and recreational
10	55 th & Euclid Retail	Rehab neighborhood retail	55 th Street, facing blocks on the north and south, from Michigan Avenue to Euclid Avenue		Commercial
11	TIF Project "G"	Mixed-Use, residential	59 th Street to 63 rd Street Corridor, Park Avenue to Prospect Avenue		Mixed-use
12	Prospect Mixed Use Centers	Mixed-Use	55 th , 59 th , and 63 rd Streets and Prospect Avenue		Mixed-use

PURPOSE

The purpose of this plan is to provide a framework for future development within the neighborhood and identify existing neighborhood problems and possible solutions. The objective of public participation planning is to integrate public policy, neighborhood residents' concerns, and neighborhood development potential in a comprehensive plan. As outlined in the statement of "Vision for the Future" in the *Blue Hills Neighborhood Association Strategic Plan*:

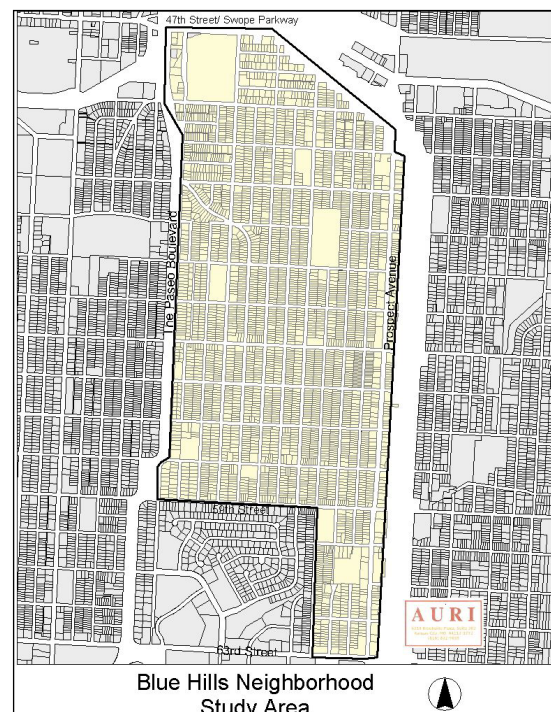
... Blue Hills Neighborhood Association will be an active, vibrant organization taking an active role in making our neighborhood a great place in which to live where all people are welcome to participate. The houses, streets and parks will be well kept. Children, families and senior citizens will be and will feel safe enough to walk the streets and visit with their neighbors. Strong businesses will support the needs of our residents. The real estate market will be healthy with families buying and selling homes. People will be receiving loans to support these activities and to support the home improvement of long-term residents. When visitors drive through our neighborhood, they will see what we have accomplished and say, "This would be a great place to live." [p. 2]

To bring this vision to reality, community leaders and residents of the Blue Hills Neighborhood have requested assistance in preparing the Blue Hills Neighborhood Plan that will become an adopted public policy document to direct the future of the neighborhood. As a public policy document this Neighborhood Plan will provide a guide for the City that is responsive to the desires of the residents of Blue Hills.

BOUNDARIES

For the purpose of this neighborhood plan the boundaries of the Blue Hills Neighborhood have been established as:

- Swope Parkway/47th Street on the north
- 59th Street/63rd Street on the south
- Prospect Avenue on the east
- The Paseo Boulevard on the west



PROJECT AREA

The Blue Hills Neighborhood is primarily a single-family residential area, with commercial/retail/office uses along the eastern and southern edges. Much of the existing housing remains in good condition; however, those conditions can change dramatically from block to block. Along Prospect Avenue, the eastern boundary, many of the commercial/ retail/office spaces are in the process of decay and deterioration.

Surrounding the neighborhood are The Paseo Boulevard, Swope Parkway, 63rd Street and the Bruce R. Watkins Roadway. Access to these important transportation routes provides essential linkages for residents of Blue Hills to the entire Kansas City area.

PLANNING PARTICIPANTS

The Blue Hills Neighborhood Plan was prepared with the active participation of four groups:

- Blue Hills Neighborhood Association and Area Residents
- Applied Urban Research Institute
- Community Builders of Kansas City
- City of Kansas City, Missouri

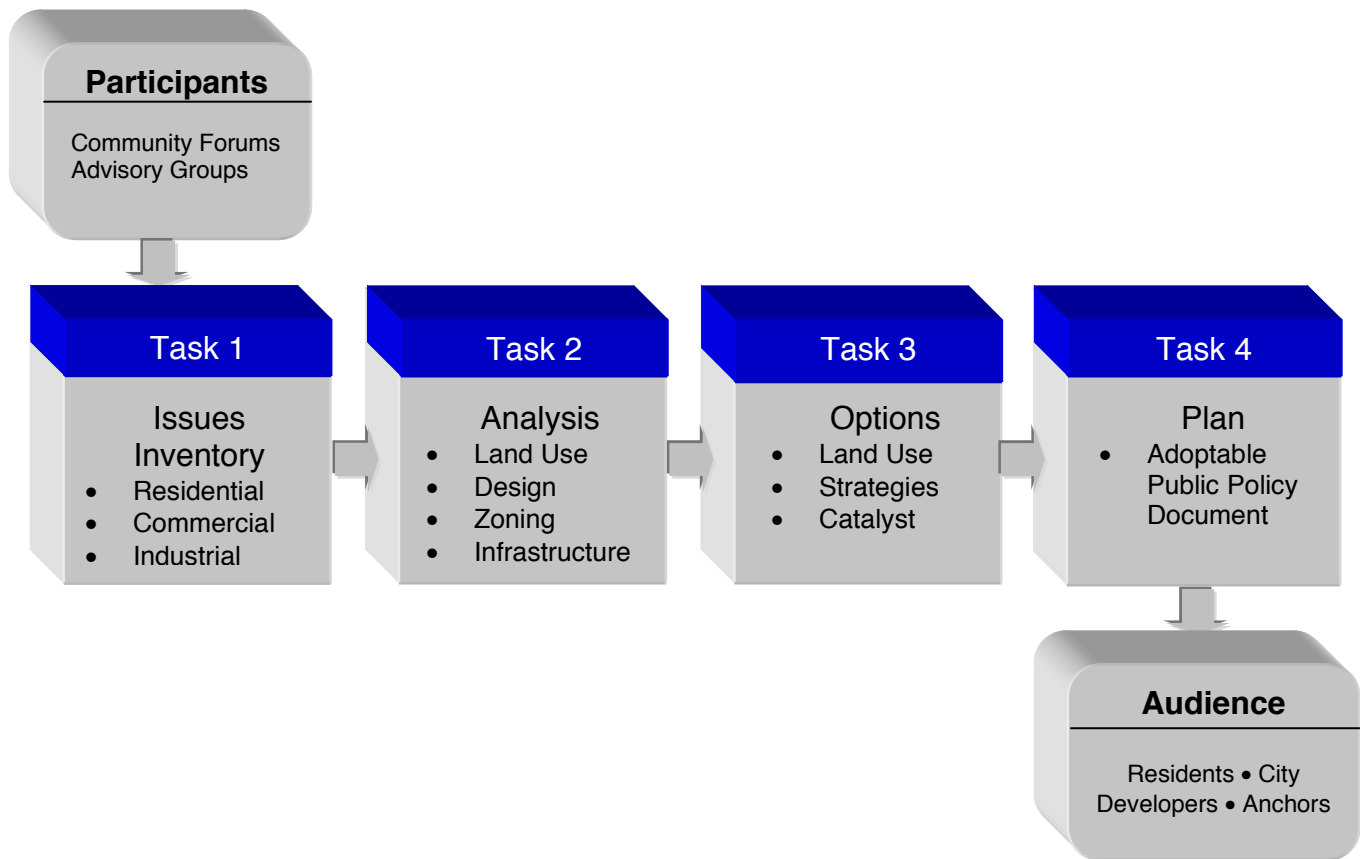
NON-DISCRIMINATION

Nothing in the neighborhood plan to be adopted by the City shall have the intent of, give the impression of, or result in, discrimination against anyone by reason of race, color, creed, national origin, gender or sexual orientation.

PLANNING PROCESS

The five-month planning process involves four main tasks. *Task 1.0 Issues Inventory* identifies area concerns through a series of community forums, advisory group meetings and interviews with area stakeholders. *Task 2.0 Analysis* involves an assessment of current planning and development efforts, as well as a profile of existing conditions. *Task 3.0 Options* considers existing plans and proposes feasible land use, public improvements and available resources for several target development areas. *Task 4.0 Neighborhood Plan* outlines specific development projects and actions by type characteristics, size, costs and benefits.

The planning process includes the structured involvement of institutional and development representatives, public agencies and the community at large. The process is illustrated on the following page.



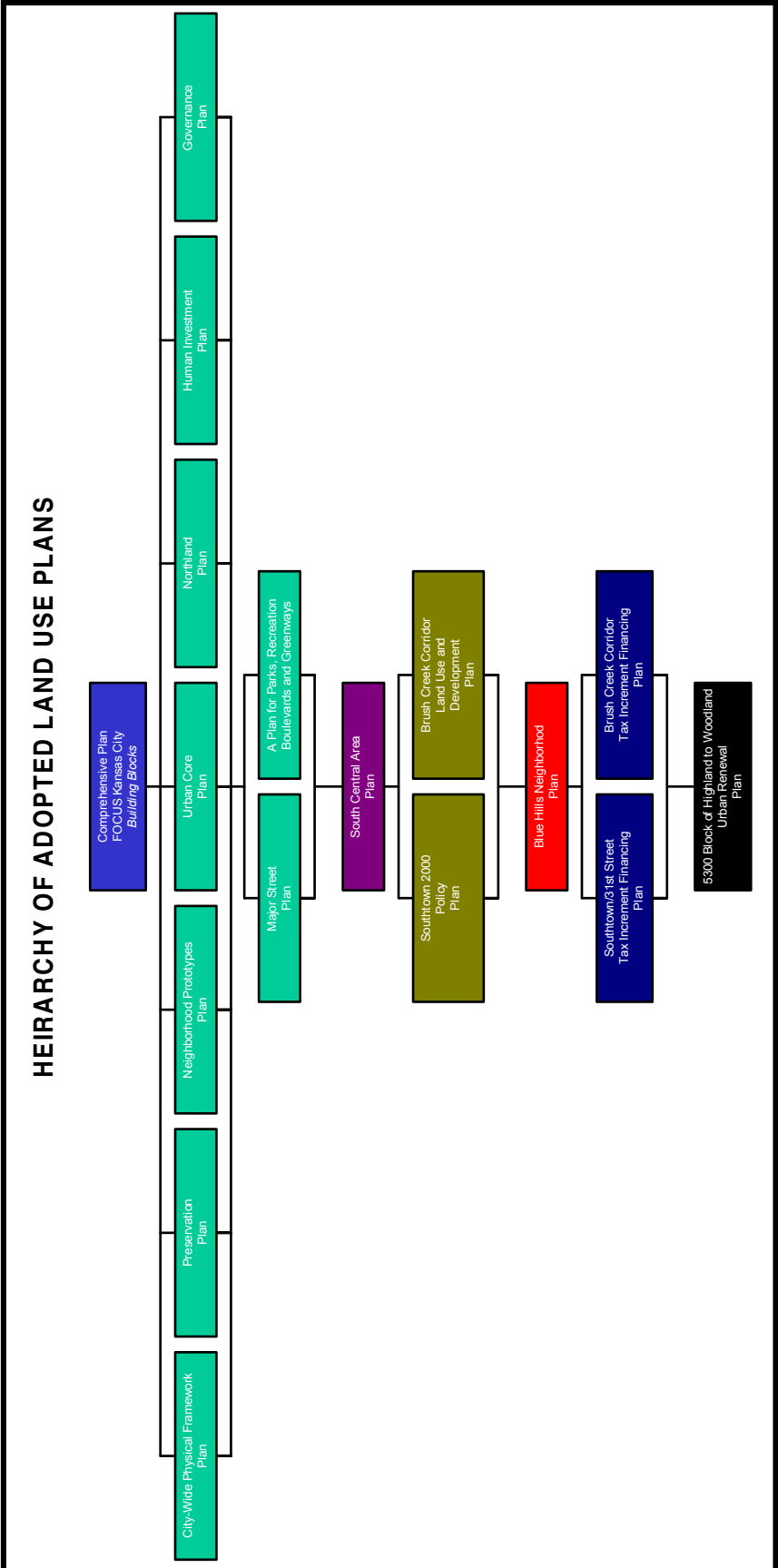
HIERARCHY OF ADOPTED PLANS

Existing City planning documents that set forth public policy, land use designations and other guidelines for the Blue Hills Neighborhood study area include the following:

- *FOCUS Kansas City: Building Blocks*
- *FOCUS Kansas City: Component Plans*
- *Major Street Plan*
- *A Plan for Parks, Recreation, Boulevards and Greenways*
- *South Central Area Plan*
- *Southtown 2000 Policy Plan*
- *Brush Creek Corridor Land Use and Development Plan*
- *Brush Creek Corridor Tax Increment Financing Plan*
- *Southtown/31st Street Tax Increment Financing Plan*
- *5300 Block of Highland to Woodland Urban Renewal Plan*

Each of these documents is reviewed briefly in this section, presented in order from the broad, citywide perspective to the more focused, neighborhood-level applicability.

The chart on the following page illustrates the hierarchy of adopted land use plans, and how the Blue Hills Neighborhood Plan fits into that hierarchy.



PLAN SUMMARIES

The following are brief summaries of each plan, beginning with the citywide plans and moving toward the more area-specific planning documents. Included in the summaries is a discussion of each plan's applicability in Blue Hills.

FOCUS Kansas City: Building Blocks (1997)

FOCUS is the City's comprehensive and strategic plan adopted by City Council in 1997 that employs a unifying strategy to guide and link specific recommendations. That unifying strategy is embodied in twelve Building Blocks that relate to each of the component plans of FOCUS. Elements of these component plans related to the Blue Hills Neighborhood Plan will be discussed throughout this report. For purposes of identifying FOCUS-related issues in this report, a discussion of the Building Blocks as they relate to the Blue Hills Neighborhood is provided in this section, followed by specific FOCUS recommendations taken from the component plans.

For each of the 12 Building Blocks, text from FOCUS appears in italics as a direct quote, followed by commentary that addresses its application in the Blue Hills Neighborhood.

Building Block #1

Citizen Access and Communication

Communication and access to the information being communicated are elements most critical for creating a well-educated, active and informed citizenry and beginning to create the connections that the New American City demands – connections between people and their government. Information and communication can also help to foster citizenship and to provide information that will engage residents in what is happening at both City Hall and in the larger community. Because of its central role in fostering citizenship, the City will take a lead role in a partnership with private interests to establish a system of communication for and among the people of Kansas City.

As an active partner in the City's formal planning efforts, the AURI planning process incorporates a defined system of communication among the residents, businesses and stakeholders in the Blue Hills Neighborhood. The planning structure formally elicited issues of these various interests through a series of forums and meetings designed to identify relevant issues, and to make those issues serious considerations in the development of any final planning options.

Building Block #2

City Life

"City Life" includes all the characteristics that make cities exciting and the specific characteristics that make Kansas City a unique and urbane place to be. City life includes activities, environment and diversity.

The residents who participated in identifying issues for the Blue Hills Neighborhood Plan have their own sense of city life. Related issues focused on maintaining and fostering areas where community can be celebrated and strengthened.

Building Block #3

Community Anchors

A community anchor is an organization that contributes to the identity, stability and growth of specific neighborhoods or of the community at large. Many such anchors are institutions such as foundations, hospitals, community clinics, universities, churches, schools, community centers, community development corporations, and similar organizations and facilities. Others are corporations, lenders, and other businesses with a significant history or presence in the community. FOCUS recognizes the value of current community anchors and will build upon these successes to more fully take advantage of the benefits of having them. Anchors are essential to making FOCUS happen in a variety of ways, including obtaining community buy-in, raising the community's awareness of important projects, moving forward on public/private partnerships, and helping funding needed initiatives.

The Applied Urban Research Institute also recognizes the importance of community anchors, and has formalized that philosophy as part of its institutional catalyst approach to planning and development. Through the various forums, the counsel of such anchors was sought, including lenders, community development corporations, businesses, and foundations, as well as established neighborhood organizations. In later tasks, these and other anchors will be referenced as they relate to proposed options, and their role in implementation and funding of these options.

Building Block #4

Cooperative Economy

In the New American City, our goal will be to provide Kansas Citizens with the opportunity to thrive and succeed in an economic system that is highly competitive. We will also seek to continue to expand our economic base by increasing property values while we create new job opportunities and increased incomes for city residents.

The Blue Hills Neighborhood is adjacent to two viable commercial and institutional corridors, namely the Brush Creek Corridor and the 63rd Street Corridor. Both Brush Creek Corridor and the 63rd Street Corridor are sites with ongoing development. However, many of the residents of Blue Hills question the present commercial uses along Prospect Avenue. They would like to see those commercial uses conform to current land use designations incorporated with a beautification program that would improve the streetscape. The issues raised regarding Prospect Avenue have helped shape the analysis and recommendations in the Blue Hills Neighborhood Plan.

Building Block #5

Connecting Corridors

Corridors are physical and cultural pathways that connect people, neighborhoods and community anchors. But corridors represent more than mere physical connections. They also link history, culture, and ideas. Like all cities, Kansas City is made up of many corridors. In all their varieties, they provide an overlapping web, which gives the City form and enriches the lives of its residents. Corridors link areas within and outside the City, provide settings for important amenities, and establish a series of landmarks by which to navigate. When corridors cross, they can become the setting for important activities such as more dense or enhanced development, community anchors, or FOCUS centers. Corridors change over time. Some corridors decay, others are reborn, while others are just emerging.

The Blue Hills Neighborhood is centrally located within some of Kansas City's vital and emerging corridors. Blue Parkway, the northern edge of the Blue Hills Neighborhood, is a significant east-west transportation link between midtown activities and the eastern part of the metro area. The Paseo Boulevard is the western edge of the neighborhood, as well as an excellent example of the Kansas City Parks & Boulevards system. The neighborhood is adjacent to three major activity centers: the Country Club Plaza to the northwest; the cultural and institutional district that includes the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, University of Missouri at Kansas City, and Rockhurst College; and the commercial districts along the 63rd Street and Prospect Corridors. It is also adjacent to two of the corridors specifically identified in FOCUS—the Brush Creek Corridor, and the Bruce R. Watkins Roadway. Residents rely on the area's corridor characteristics to tie them to the community at large.

Building Block #6

FOCUS Centers

FOCUS Centers are accessible places where information and services are made readily available to Kansas Citizens near their homes and neighborhoods. They are a means of providing direct access to advisors and service providers, and a place to meet with neighbors for all kinds of purposes. The underlying concept of FOCUS Centers is simply to provide a citizen-friendly connection point at the neighborhood level for better access and information about issues, services, programs, or ideas. They are not necessarily new physical buildings; they are not necessarily in a single facility; they are not another layer of bureaucracy or a satellite city hall. Centers will be neighborhood-based and will provide a broad range of direct services to residents. They will be visible and accessible to all. These Centers will be cooperative efforts between the City, community institutions and organizations, and private-sector entities including existing CDCs or other non-profits.

Establishing FOCUS Centers is perhaps the most specific and direct of the FOCUS Building Blocks. While none of the participants in the Blue Hills Neighborhood study area specifically requested a FOCUS Center within their neighborhood, some residents did include among their issues the need for more connectivity with the city, needs that cannot be met by the existing Community Action Network (CAN) Center in the area. Other issues that center around a lack of information from the City, or confusing or conflicting information about improvements happening within the Southtown/31st & Baltimore Tax Increment Financing Plan, might be addressed by connecting Blue Hills residents and businesses to a FOCUS Center.

Building Block #7

Healthy Community

*The New American City emphasizes an acceptable quality of life for all residents and **preventing** problems, whether they be health problems or larger problems of the entire community. The emphasis...is on preventing problems before they start rather than on alleviating problems once they become entrenched. A true collaboration among the public, private, and non-profit sectors is necessary to create a community in which everyone has a basic standard of health and safety, racism and intolerance are eliminated, everyone feels a part of Kansas City and is working toward similar goals, people are involved in government, and Kansas City's reputation for "good government" is still strong.*

Two elements of this task of the Blue Hills Neighborhood Plan have connection with the Healthy Community Building Block. By employing best planning practices, the Issues Inventory works to identify not only existing problems, but also future problems, particularly those that result from incompatible development. By combining the issues of all the stakeholders and considering them collectively, the plan represents the result of a “true collaboration” which is essential to healthy communities.

Building Block #8

Investing in Critical Resources

For Kansas City to become the model New American City, commitment to investment in the most basic and essential city services is a high priority...Kansas City’s “critical resources” are really the most basic city services and tend to be those aspects of public service most appropriately managed by the local governmental organization. In this context, the Critical Resources building block can be thought of as the City government building block. It defines the irreducible obligations of Kansas City government.

This building block is the basis of the Blue Hills Neighborhood Plan. Due to the rapid changes in the Blue Hills Neighborhood as well as the significant public and private sector investments in and around the neighborhood, the residents of Blue Hills requested a Neighborhood Plan to guide future development in their neighborhood. To address future development, residents of Blue Hills have targeted land use, zoning and service needs as key issues. Assessment and response to those topics will require assistance from the City, which has already proposed to address many of those service needs through the infrastructure improvements identified during the Community Forums. Still, service needs continue to emerge through discussions with residents and businesses in the area.

Building Block #9

Life Long Learning

The entire city is a learning environment, and each person we come into contact with is someone who can help us learn. Business and industry and institutions will open their doors to citizens of all ages and invite them to visit and understand the activities that make the business or institution grow and prosper. Learning opportunities related to work, whether it be education on the nature of work or the types of training that and retraining that workers need, must be available to people as they need it and at each learning point in their lives, from pre-school to adult training and retraining programs.

Two specific issues were identified in the planning process that relate to the Life Long Learning Building Block. Residents expressed the need for a community center that would provide space adequate for youth, adult and senior programs as well as a meeting place for neighborhood and block groups. Some of the activities identified for the center were guest speakers, theater, recreational programs, and computer training. The residents would also like to explore the option of a charter school that would serve the youth of the area.

Building Block #10

Moving About the City

The ability to move people and goods throughout the city, and to connect all locations within the city is essential to the economic, social, and cultural success of the New

*American City. The intent of FOCUS is to increase the ease of, and broaden the options for, moving about our city, and to create logical extensions of the existing transportation network. FOCUS will create an environment that will encourage people...to move comfortably around all parts of the city by whatever means they desire. Moving about the city requires attention to, and integration of, many different ways of moving from place to place—called **multi-modal transportation**.*

This Building Block builds on the ideas articulated earlier concerning the corridor aspect of the Blue Hills Neighborhood, and moves toward the need to make the area accessible in a variety of ways. Particular issues identified by residents include concerns about their ability to move conveniently and safely within the neighborhood. Some residents noted concerns about the placement of the proposed light rail system. For others, transportation needs include amenities such as bike and pedestrian access. Final planning recommendations will consider these connectivity concerns.

Building Block #11

Neighborhood Livability

*In order for Kansas City to be the successful New American City, neighborhoods must be livable. Livable neighborhoods **connect** people physically and socially. They have an **identity** based on physical character, people, history or resident involvement. They meet the **housing needs** and desires of people. And they are **healthy** in terms of housing conditions, neighborhood cleanliness, and the health of the people who live in them.*

Of all the categories of issues identified by stakeholders in Blue Hills, none were as prevalent or as universally cited by all groups as the issues of aesthetics, cleanliness and blight within Blue Hills. While the area has many attractive features, those familiar with the area share a concern that blighted buildings and sub-standard developments, areas overgrown with vegetation, and isolated illegal dumping sites detract from the area's considerable assets. These detractions, taken together, constitute a significant barrier to effective future development and improvement within Blue Hills.

Building Block #12

Quality Places to Live and Work

The people and businesses of Kansas City will have a variety of high quality places from which they can choose to live and work. From the central city to the suburbs, Kansas City will draw from the best of its historical development patterns, add ideas that reflect today's needs, and encourage the development of high quality places. Through creating new, and updating existing regulations and standards, the City will help establish a development environment that responds to market conditions and is supportive of people and businesses working to improve their neighborhoods and districts. We will emphasize creating residential neighborhoods and non-residential districts throughout the city that have clear identities and are unique in character, with development that complements what is nearby. New development will also maximize protection of the natural environment. [These qualities] present true alternatives to the traditional suburban pattern that exists outside the city, in-town alternatives for those who want to live and work in the center of the city, and marketable features for prospective property owners, renters, businesses, and their customers.

Quality in all efforts is a shared characteristic of the issues identified in the planning process by the various Blue Hills stakeholders. Residents emphasized the need to maintain the current quality of their neighborhood. They also stressed the importance of complementary, quality development, whether such development is the current level of activity or new development. Community development interests urged that any development activity that occurs be done in such a way as to capitalize on the existing character of the area. Many of the issues identified in the Community Forums focused on retaining that quality, including the need to address flooding and sewer improvements to raise the level of quality, developable property, and preventing the loss of value to residents and businesses already owning property in the area.

FOCUS Kansas City: Component Plans (1997)

The *Urban Core Plan* includes strategies for central city neighborhoods, downtown, and the Central Business Corridor, as well as plans for economic development, jobs, capital improvements, public transportation and neighborhood livability. The following recommendations taken from the *Urban Core Plan* have applicability for Blue Hills:

- Reinforce and embrace mixed-use neighborhoods
- Encourage the further revitalization of the Brush Creek Corridor

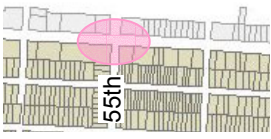

Brush Creek Corridor. The Brush Creek Corridor provides an important east-west connection for Kansas Citians. The \$380 million of capital investment in the area has the potential of sparking reinvestment in adjacent neighborhoods. Specific Brush Creek Corridor initiatives proposed in the FOCUS Urban Core Plan are:


- Develop light rail stations with accessible connections
- Invest in 47th Street as a “Great Street”
- Support activities of the corridor’s institutions and not-for-profits

Great Streets. Investing in the “Great Streets” network is an element in all of the FOCUS Kansas City component plans, and is most specifically described in the Urban Core Plan. A “Great Street” network promotes the concentration of new development and/or the rehabilitation of activity along specific corridors linking key activity centers across the community. The “Great Streets” network surrounds the Blue Hills Neighborhood, as the following table illustrates:

Street	“Great Street” Designation
Blue Parkway	Boulevard
47 th Street	Great Street/Boulevard
The Paseo Boulevard	Boulevard
63 rd Street	Mixed-Use Great Street
Prospect Avenue	Residential Great Street

Mixed-Use Centers. The Urban Core Plan emphasizes the need for mixed-use centers. The table on the following pages outlines the mixed-use centers recommended in the *FOCUS Urban Core Plan*, pages 67-68.

Mixed-Use Candidate Center Sites	Current Use	Vintage Landmarks	Advantage	Opportunities	Potential Model Development	Current Zoning		Prototype Opportunity
						Pot.	Zoning	
55 th & Prospect 	Small scale neighborhood retail	1920-1930	Access to Bruce R. Watkins Drive	Access to Bruce R. Watkins and potential as a light rail stop make this node a potential transit hub with supporting and complementary development such as a park-and-ride lot and higher density housing with neighborhood supporting retail and services	Small Neighborhood Center	C2 Strip	Yes	Yes
59 th & Prospect 	Grocery, restaurant, automotive repair, religious center, fast food service	1960	Access to Bruce R. Watkins Drive	Access to Bruce R. Watkins and potential as a light rail stop make this node a potential transit hub with supporting and complementary development such as a park and ride lot and higher density housing with neighborhood supporting retail and services	Small Neighborhood Center	C2 Strip	Yes	Yes

Mixed-Use Candidate Center Sites	Current Use	Vintage Landmarks	Advantage	Opportunities	Potential Model Development	Current Zoning		Prototype Opportunity
						Pot.	Zoning	
63 rd & Meyer Corridor 	Extensive retail, restaurant and professional services	1920-1930 Landing shopping center, Nazarene Headquart- ers, Research Medical Cener	Density of existing infrastructure and activity	As described by the <i>Southtown 2000 Policy Plan</i> , additional uses such as grocery, department store, hotel, new restaurant and retail are desired for the area. The Landing and adjacent areas should be improved to include better pedestrian and transit access and more attractive facilities. The addition of more office space would provide a broader customer base.	Neighborhood Center	C3a2, C3a1, C P2, R2 MU1- MU2		Yes

The *FOCUS City-Wide Physical Framework Plan* states that “A well designed pedestrian environment is critical for mixed-use centers, as well as for providing access to the existing and future transit network...Pedestrian improvements should be prioritized for areas within mixed-use developments, schools, parks, and access to transit.” (*FOCUS City-Wide Physical Framework Plan*, pg. 76)

Major Street Plan (1991)

The City's *Major Street Plan* provides a basis for securing land for future street rights-of-way in Kansas City. It describes the general alignment and functional classification of streets, highways and parkways in an ultimate arterial network. The *Major Street Plan* outlines the role of freeways, expressways, primary arterials, secondary arterials, collectors, local streets and parkways/boulevards. The Blue Hills neighborhood is bordered by several major streets, listed below.

Parkway/Boulevards:

Paseo Boulevard, Swope Parkway

Freeways/Interstates:

Bruce R. Watkins Roadway

Expressways:

Swope Parkway

Primary Arterials:

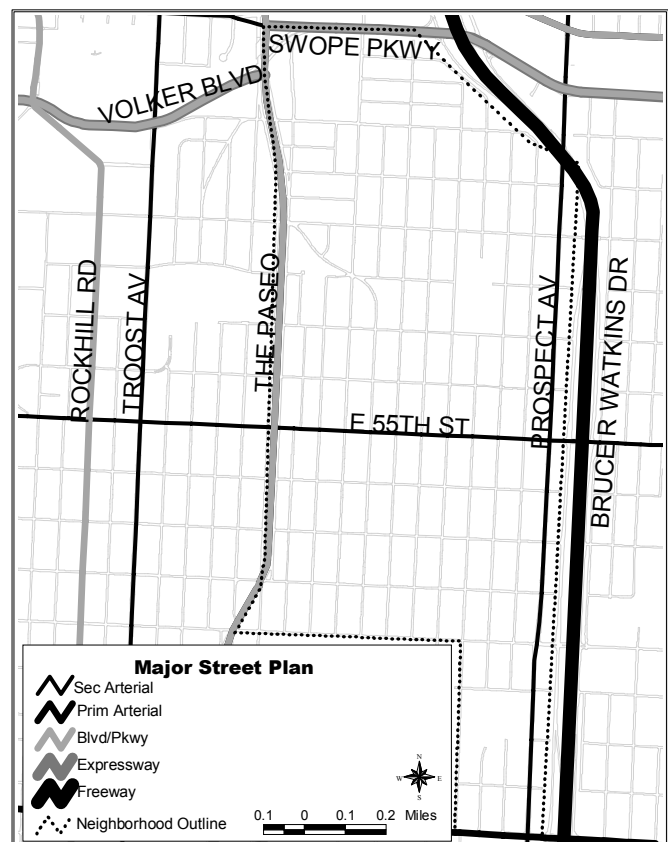
Prospect Avenue, 63rd Street

Secondary Arterials:

55th Street

Special Purpose Rapid Transit Corridor:

Bruce R. Watkins Roadway



A Plan for Parks, Recreation, Boulevards and Greenways (1993)

A Plan for Parks, Recreation, Boulevards and Greenways describes the parkland inventory of the city and unmet needs for regional, neighborhood and community parks. The Blue Hills neighborhood is located within the southwest section of the park survey conducted for the plan. Blue Hills is served by Blue Hills Park, a 10.37-acre park space. This is a large park that provides adequate space for the neighborhood; however the southwest section of Kansas City has a shortage of community parks. *A Plan for Parks, Recreation, Boulevards and Greenways* recommends that the shortage could be met by using portions of Brush Creek Park. The plan also makes the following recommendations for the southwest section of Kansas City:

- One public pool of fifty meters is needed, perhaps adjacent to a community center.

- Seven additional tennis courts are indicated. Five of those can be provided by the over supply along Brush Creek. Two additional courts are recommended in Dunn Park.
- Demand for golf courses can be met at Swope Park.
- There is a shortage of baseball diamonds, football and soccer fields and there are essentially no opportunities to expand athletic field service.
- No ice skating sites are recommended.
- The need for trails will be addressed in the Brush Creek Waterways project and along Blue Parkway.

South Central Area Plan (rev. 2002)

This excerpt is only a cursory look at some of the plan's primary goals, with a focus on housing-related design concerns applicable to the Blue Hills Neighborhood Study Area.

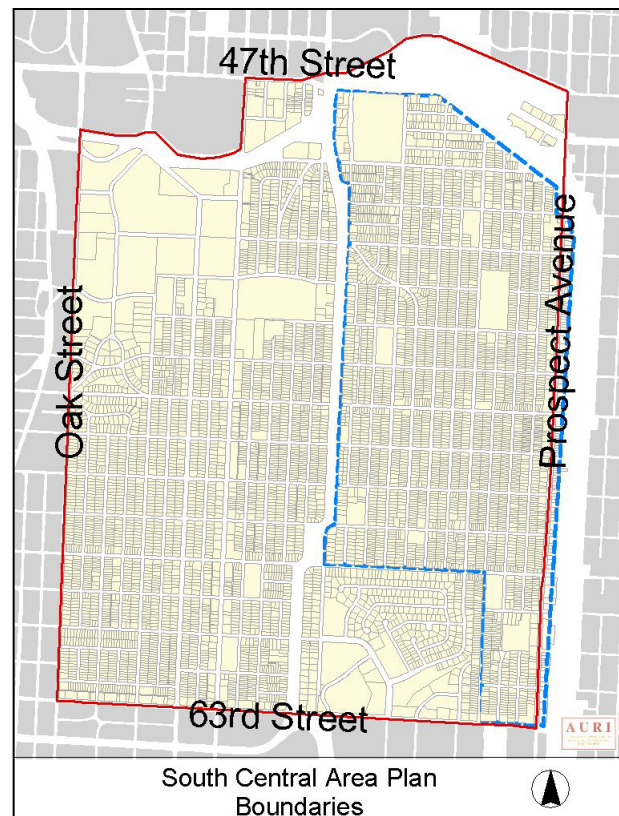
An Area Plan provides a comprehensive analysis of all aspects of the physical environment as a basis for planning recommendations. The Blue Hills Neighborhood is located within the planning boundaries of the South Central Area Plan. The South Central Planning Area is bounded by:

- 47th Street on the north
- Prospect Avenue on the east
- 63rd Street on the south
- Oak Street on the west

The South Central Planning Area is No. 7 of 46 areas for which plans were prepared by the City Planning and Development Department for the City of Kansas City, Missouri. This plan was adopted by the City Council in March 1980 through Resolution No. 51319. The South Central Area Plan was amended as follows:

- Plaza Urban Design and Development Plan, June, 1989, Resolution No. 63221
- Southtown 2000 Policy Plan, November, 1989, Resolution No. 63221
- NEC of 63rd and Troost, November, 1997, Committee Substitute for Resolution No. 971077
- February 11, 1998, Resolution No. 981498
- March 13, 1999, Resolution No. 990137

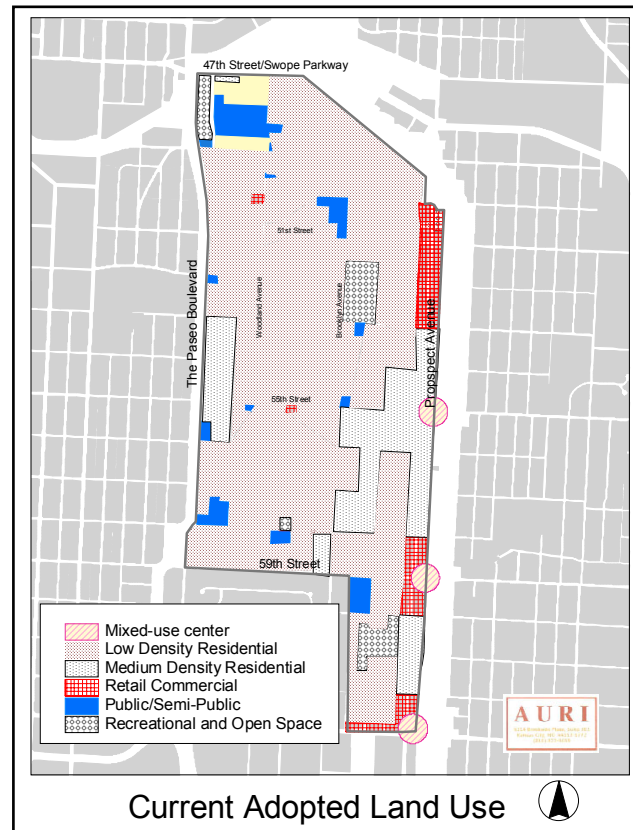
According to this area plan's recommendation for future use:



South Central will continue to be a residential area that is located near a variety of facilities that support the residential environment. Elements that contribute to this function include: maintenance and investment in facilities that surround the area, maintenance of the convenience and access to these facilities, stabilization of the population characteristics, continuation of programs for conservation and rehabilitation, preservation of single-family dwellings as the dominant land use, sustaining a positive and active relationship among area residents and the institutions, and providing additional park space.

This plan specifically identifies the Blue Hills Neighborhood study area as “a Conservation and Rehabilitation area wherein programs focus upon residential maintenance improvement, a rehabilitation loan program, and improvements to streets, curbs and gutters.” Other recommendations affecting the Blue Hills Neighborhood include:

- **The single-family residential environment should be preserved.** Two-family dwellings will remain a secondary residential land use. Conversion of single-family into two-family dwellings presently permitted in R2b can be prevented by rezoning from R2b to R1b (single-family).
- **Businesses should be retained at the edge of the area and examine the creation of a cluster commercial development.** Most of the commercial land uses are located at the fringe of the area along major streets. Commercial rehabilitation and retention will strengthen and preserve the single-family oriented nature of the area and encourage support of businesses by area residents. The creation of cluster commercial centers at intersections with the Bruce R. Watkins Roadway would be a convenience to both roadway users and residents.
- **The appearance of the area should be improved** through a continuous exterior/grounds inspection, maintenance and improvement to sidewalks, curbs and gutters, rehabilitation of structures needing repair and demolition of substandard structures.



Specific Land Use designations for the eastern section of Prospect Avenue were taken from the Town Fork Creek Area Plan, Approved by the City Council on March 10, 1978.

In the conclusions of the *South Central Area Plan*, specific actions needed to ensure conservation and maintenance of the residential areas are outlined.

- R1b zoning should be the dominant residential zoning classification.
- Neighborhood property conservation programs should be operated between Troost and Prospect Avenue, 47th to 63rd Street.
- Dangerous buildings should be demolished.
- A neighborhood recreational center and additional park space should be provided (south of 55th Street).
- Public improvements should be systematically monitored and provided north of 51st Street between the Paseo and Prospect Avenue.
- Symbols, entrance identification markers, and landscaping should be constructed at key sites.

Southtown 2000 Policy Plan (1989)

The *Southtown 2000 Policy Plan*, prepared by the City Planning and Development Department in cooperation with the Southtown Council, was adopted by the City Council in 1989. Southtown's boundaries are from 47th Street to 75th Street between Bruce R. Watkins Roadway and the Brookside/Main Corridor. As stated in the document:

This plan has been prepared in recognition of the need to stimulate and direct development in Southtown and in response to a perception that development trends are improving or about to improve in Southtown. Before such developments take place, a vision of Southtown's future ought to be in place.

The purpose of this plan includes stimulating and guiding development activities that are positive for Southtown, setting priorities for public and private investment in Southtown, and encouraging public discussion about issues important to Southtown.

Eight planning and development goals are outlined in *Southtown 2000*, along with associated policies, as follows:

1. Strengthen existing businesses and create an environment conducive to attracting desired businesses.

- The Southtown area will have three major nodes and several smaller clusters of commercial activity.
- Establish locations and mechanisms for attracting desired uses, such as grocery stores, restaurants, motels, retail shops, and small-scale regional wholesale uses.
- Improve both vehicular and pedestrian traffic flow and intersections to support businesses and business development.
- Assess the potential impacts on neighborhoods as business retention, expansion, and development are being planned.

2. Enhance /capitalize on the maintenance and architectural character of viable Southtown commercial areas so as to stabilize these areas.

- Establish development plans for commercial revitalization along Troost south of the institutional campuses and for viable commercial clusters on Prospect.
- Improve aesthetics on Troost and Prospect.
- Enhance 63rd Street as an office/institutional corridor with retail clusters at Troost and Prospect.
- Limit on-street parking, curb cuts, and loading on Troost and Prospect.

3. Capitalize on the unique attractive institutional, research, and educational uses in Southtown.

- Use these campus environments to reinforce and extend the park and boulevard character of Southtown.
- Ensure the stability and room for expansion of these institutional, research, and education facilities, and their auxiliary support facilities.
- Capitalize on the interests and needs of students and employees at these institutions and facilities in long-range planning for Southtown.

4. Minimize and redesign development patterns that may negatively impact the area's growth.

- Planning for Prospect and Bruce R. Watkins Roadway will include implementing policies of institutional expansion, commercial clustering and residential development.
- The area to the east of Bruce R. Watkins Roadway should retain its residential character.
- Off-street parking should be landscaped and buffering should be made more stringent and definitive.

5. Maintain existing residential stability and capitalize on the strength and diversity of Southtown neighborhoods and the cohesive sense of community in Southtown neighborhoods.

- Encourage maintenance and conservation of neighborhoods.
- Redevelop vacant lots and badly deteriorated dwelling units where appropriate.
- Establish Neighborhood Planning Districts (NPD).
- Improve public facilities and infrastructure to enhance neighborhoods.

6. Enhance the park/boulevard/green space character of Southtown.

- Create "Gateway Parks" at the intersection of primary arterials, including landscaping, fountains and/or statues.

- Improve the City's maintenance of parks and boulevards and use them as urban design form-givers.
- Create aesthetically planned and beautified arterials throughout Southtown, including landscaping, fountains and/or statues.

7. Enhance the ability of boulevards and “greened” arterials to link the diverse sections of Southtown.

- Make Bruce R. Watkins Drive an aesthetically pleasing parkway.
- Ensure that Bruce R. Watkins Drive relates in a positive manner to the adjoining neighborhoods.
- Enhance the interconnections of parks and boulevards and the use of these and other green space to connect and identify major focal points and institutions.
- Discourage vehicular traffic through neighborhoods and enhance the pedestrian experience within neighborhoods.

8. Stimulate public investment to create an environment for economic and community growth and to support the other goals of Southtown 2000.

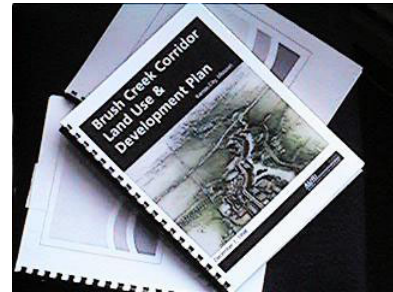
- Direct public investment toward capital improvements and redevelopment incentives for housing and commercial development.
- Include projects important to public and private investment initiative in Southtown in the City's capital improvements program as a Capital Improvement Plan for Southtown.
- Maximize all allocation of public funding for infrastructure in Southtown as a “strategic” location of importance to Kansas City.
- Design all improvements in the Southtown area so as to promote a safe environment.

Also included in the full text of the *Southtown 2000 Policy Plan* is a range of development alternatives, as well as an Action Plan for specific areas and projects. Many of the suggestions in the Southtown plan have direct relevance to the Blue Hills Neighborhood (the Blue Hills Neighborhood comprises a large portion of the Southtown area and the Southtown plan is just above the Blue Hills Neighborhood Plan in the hierarchy of plans). Strengthening businesses and institutions adjacent to the neighborhood will increase the value of properties within Blue Hills. Goals in the Southtown plan are shared issues made evident in community meetings for Blue Hills, including: “residential stability,” “development patterns,” and “enhance the park/boulevard/green space character.” As a consequence, Blue Hills’ residents should look to the Southtown plan to fortify and to accomplish these shared goals.

Brush Creek Corridor Land Use and Development Plan (1999)

Participants in the planning process included:

- Brush Creek Community Partners
- Applied Urban Research Institute
- Residents of 14 neighborhoods



The planning process included: (1) identification of community issues; (2) developing an options framework; and (3) preparing a land use and development plan. Looking towards development potential, the plan also sought to study how market forces could foster institutional, housing, and retail development and how policies and projects could coordinate to encourage development. Strategies that developed from these inquiries included:

- Employing more intense land use adjacent to the creek
- Neighborhood redevelopment throughout the Corridor
- Enhancing parkland facilities

Following are public policy recommendations from the *Brush Creek Corridor Land Use and Development Plan*:

- Reflect open space, mixed use, low-medium density residential, and retail commercial.
- Zoning should be examined to alter development parameters.
- Invest in public infrastructure projects.
- Traffic impact assessment and analysis to enhance development sites.

In 1996 the idea of a master plan for the Brush Creek area was initiated; by the end of the year a proposal was submitted for a Brush Creek Land Use and Development Plan. The purpose in writing the plan was to shape urban design, land use and landscape guidelines, focusing on institutional involvement in community development, framing development plans and physical development, and involving the community in a structured process. Beginning in 1992, several development projects began to take shape, ranging from area plans to road construction and institutional development. With this sudden rise in development projects came an opportunity to coordinate the individual projects into a collaborative effort for the Brush Creek Corridor. Forging a corridor identity, Brush Creek Partners was established to represent the many institutions and organizations within and adjacent to the Brush Creek Corridor. Brush Creek Community Partners represented education, arts, research, recreation, health, and religious organizations and became the client for the Brush Creek Land Use and Development Plan. In 1997 Brush Creek Partners and public agencies adopted the report and in 1999 the City of Kansas City, Missouri adopted the *Brush Creek Corridor Land Use and Development Plan*.

Brush Creek Corridor Tax Increment Financing Plan (1999)

Tax increment financing allows project costs to be financed with revenue generated from payments in lieu of taxes and economic activity taxes.

The Brush Creek Corridor Tax Increment Finance (TIF) Plan includes a redevelopment plan outlining sixteen development project areas. These projects encompass:

- New construction of office, retail, institutions and new surface and structured parking
- Job creation, development and business opportunities
- Urban design enhancements along Brush Creek
- Neighborhood stabilization
- Removal of blight and promotion of the general welfare
- Service demand increase for surrounding areas
- Encouragement of private investment
- Development of project areas at their highest and best uses
- Promotion of FOCUS goals and objectives
- Efficiency and economy in development

While the TIF plan does not outline a specific development project in the Blue Hills Neighborhood, the northern section of the neighborhood is included within the boundaries of the TIF district. The area of Blue Hills inside of the District includes: 47th Terrace to 49th Street and Woodland Avenue to Prospect Avenue. In the draft of the *First Amendment to the Brush Creek Financing Plan*, Exhibit 15, Section G: Neighborhood Improvements, it is stated that “an essential component to the success of this plan is the interaction and rehabilitation of the areas within and adjacent to the district. No acquisition is proposed for residential areas of this plan.” The TIF Commission will work with neighborhood associations to enforce the residential component of the Plan.

As stated in the *Brush Creek Corridor Tax Increment Financing Plan: Task 1 Summary Report*, “amounts in the Special Allocation Fund not necessary for reimbursement may be directed to other areas, called benefit projects.” The benefit projects are further defined as areas within the boundaries that will not pay into the Special Allocation Fund, but do “receive and contribute towards the community benefit that accrues from TIF.” Therefore, Blue Hills is eligible for physical improvements such as street upgrading, curbing, lighting, landscaping, and housing as a result of being in the TIF district. The TIF-supported investment is expected to increase property value and contribute to overall aesthetics of the District.

Southtown/31st Street Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Plan (2000)

There are two areas of redevelopment in this TIF Plan. The first, the larger area, spans from 59th Street to the north, Montgall to the east Gregory to the south and Holmes Road to the west. The second is in the general area of Main Street and 31st Street. The TIF Plan consists of fourteen projects, two of which have been completed.

Health Midwest Partners for Change has taken the lead in implementing the TIF Plan to revitalize the residential and commercial neighborhoods surrounding the Research and Baptist Medical Centers. The TIF Plan will assist in the redevelopment efforts by providing for the new tax revenues from new construction redevelopment projects. In turn, these new taxes will be used to assist the surrounding residents in stabilizing and improving their neighborhood. TIF dollars will be used to retain and attract new businesses to the area. The tax increment financing revenue, along with other local, state and federal dollars, will ultimately assist with the rehabilitation of existing homes and residential infill.

5300 Block of Highland to Woodland Urban Renewal Plan (1999)

The 5300 Block of Highland to Woodland Urban Renewal Plan set the stage for the redevelopment of the site formerly known as Little Sisters of the Poor. At the time of this plan the site contained a large complex that included:

- Main house
- Chapel
- Dormitory wing
- Poultry house
- Power house
- Outbuilding
- Barn building

The site was abandoned and left to deteriorate for fourteen years. As a result of neglect and vandalism, this once vibrant facility was causing blight and decay in the neighborhood. The Blight Study determined that it was necessary to demolish the majority of the property, and the site should be redeveloped, providing increased housing options for the surrounding area. Excluded from demolition has been the barn building and portions of the stone retaining wall. It is the vision of the urban renewal plan that every effort be made to retain portions of the stone retaining wall, as well as creating an adaptive reuse for the stable building.

Development of this block will remove a significant area of blight and provide opportunity to examine development of not only this block, but adjacent spaces too, thus encouraging revitalization throughout the neighborhood. The current development proposal for the site includes the construction of nineteen single-family homes, including renovation of the stable building into a single-family home. Constructions of the new single-family homes are scheduled to begin in November 2002.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this plan is to provide a framework for future development within the neighborhood and identify existing neighborhood problems and possible solutions. The objective of public participation planning is to integrate public policy, neighborhood residents' concerns, and neighborhood development potential in a comprehensive plan.

To bring this vision to reality, community leaders and residents of the Blue Hills Neighborhood have requested assistance in preparing a Blue Hills Neighborhood Plan that will become an adoptable public policy document to direct the future of the neighborhood. As a public policy document, this Neighborhood Plan will provide a guide for the City that is responsive to the desires of the residents of Blue Hills.

For the purpose of this neighborhood plan the boundaries of the Blue Hills Neighborhood have been established as:

- Swope Parkway/47th Street on the north
- 59th Street/63rd Street on the south
- Prospect Avenue on the east
- The Paseo Boulevard on the west

The Blue Hills Neighborhood is primarily a single-family residential area, with commercial/retail/office uses along the eastern and southern edge. Much of the existing housing remains in good condition, however those conditions can change dramatically from block to block.

The Blue Hills Neighborhood Plan was prepared with the active participation of four groups:

- Blue Hills Neighborhood Association and Area Residents
- Applied Urban Research Institute
- Community Builders of Kansas City
- City of Kansas City, Missouri

The five-month planning process involves four main tasks, which includes the structured involvement of institutional and the community at large. *Task 1.0 Issues Inventory* identifies area concerns through a series of community forums, advisory group meetings and interviews with area stakeholders. *Task 2.0 Analysis* involves an assessment of current planning and development efforts, as well as a profile of existing conditions. *Task 3.0 Options* considers existing plans and proposes feasible land use. Public improvements and available resources for several target development areas. *Task 4.0 Neighborhood Plan* outlines specific development projects and actions by type characteristics, size, costs and benefits.

Existing city planning documents that set forth public policy, land use designations and other guidelines for the Blue Hills Neighborhood study area include the following:

- FOCUS Kansas City: *Building Blocks*
- FOCUS Component Plans
- Major Street Plan
- A Plan for Parks, Recreation, Boulevards and Greenways
- South Central Area Plan
- Southtown 2000 Policy Plan
- Brush Creek Corridor Land Use and Development Plan
- Brush Creek Corridor Tax Increment Financing Plan
- Southtown/31st Street Tax Increment Financing Plan
- 5300 Block of Highland to Woodland

Each of these documents is reviewed briefly in this section, presented in order from the broad, citywide perspective to the more focused, neighborhood-level applicability.

INTRODUCTION

This section provides a brief overview of some of the demographic, physical and land use characteristics of the Blue Hills Neighborhood. This overview is important as a premise for the issues discussed subsequently in this report. Components of this section include:

- People First: Demographics
- Blue Hills Focus Neighborhood Assessment
- Issues Inventory
- Livable Neighborhoods
- Choice in Transportation
- Critical Resources
- Safe City
- Business and Development

PEOPLE FIRST: DEMOGRAPHICS

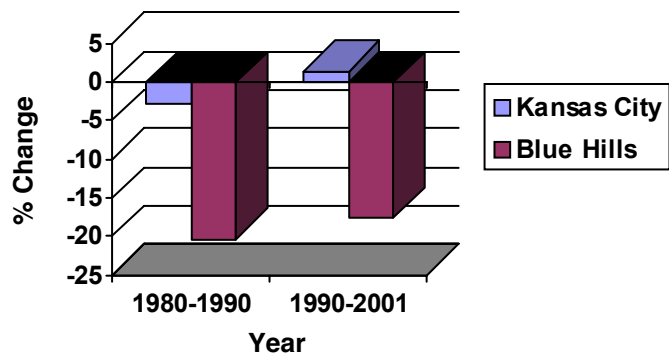
Population Characteristics

- According to U. S. Census estimates for 2001, there are 7,070 persons living in the Blue Hills area. The percent rate of change in population in Blue Hills from 1980-1990 was -20.4% compared to a -2.8% change in Kansas City. In the years 1990-2001 the percent rate of change in Blue Hills was -17.6% and the Kansas City rate of change was 1% increase in population. The population in Blue Hills continues to decline, but the rate of decline has slowed within the last ten years.

Population

	Blue Hills	Kansas City
1980	10,771	447,515
1990	8,578	435,146
2001	7,070	441,071

Rate of Change in Population

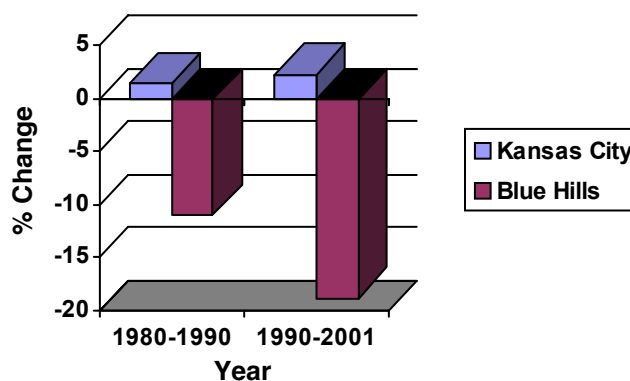


- The number of households in Blue Hills also continues to decline. The rate of change in the number of households in Blue Hills declined by 11.1% from 1980-1990 and further declined 18.8% from 1990-2001.

Number of Households

	Blue Hills	Kansas City
1980	3,034	174,962
1990	2,698	177,607
2001	2,191	181,653

Rate of Change in the Number of Households



- The average size of a household in Blue Hills is 3.23 persons compared with a city average of 2.43. According to the 1990 U.S. Census, the average Blue Hills household had 3.08 persons, and the average Kansas City household had 2.45 persons. The size of the average Blue Hills' household has increased within the last eleven years while the size of the average Kansas City household has decreased slightly.
- The percent of Blue Hills' population in the two age cohorts above age 24 is lower than found across the city, while the percent of the population younger than age 24 is higher than found across the city. These populations are not significantly different than found in 1990.

Age Distribution Within the Population

(2001)

	Blue Hills	Kansas City
< 18	30.3%	25.4%
18 - 24	11.5%	8.6%
25 - 64	49%	53%
65+	9.2%	13%

(1990)

	Blue Hills	Kansas City
< 18	31%	24.8%
18 - 64	61%	62.3%
65+	8%	12.9%

- The median age of Blue Hills' residents is estimated to be 29.9 years compared to 36 years for all of Kansas City's residents.

- The racial composition of Blue Hills' residents is significantly different than found throughout the city, but the racial composition of Blue Hills is relatively unchanged since 1990.

Racial Distribution**(Percent of Total Population, 2001)**

	Blue Hills	Kansas City
White	3.05%	61.46%
Black	95.55%	31.85%
Other	1.41%	6.68%

(Percent of Total Population, 1990)

	Blue Hills	Kansas City
White	3%	66.8%
Black	97%	29.6%
Other		3.6%

- In 1990, family households, defined as a householder and one or more other persons living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption account for almost 76% of the households in the Blue Hills Neighborhood. Just over 61% of all households in Kansas City are family households.

Households by Type (1990)

- In 1990, married couples made up 44% of family households in Blue Hills while married couples in Kansas City, Missouri represented 69.6% of family households. In the Blue Hills area, 47.4% of the family households are headed by a female householder with no husband present; the comparable rate in Kansas City is 24%.

	Blue Hills	Kansas City
Single Male	8.19%	13.81%
Single Female	12.33%	18.67%
Married Couple	33.71%	42.70%
Other Family, Male Head	6.68%	3.50%
Other Family, Female Head	35.90%	15.13%
Non Family, Male Head	2.14%	3.72%
Non Family, Female Head	1.05%	2.46%

- When compared with Kansas City residents, a lower percentage of Blue Hills' residents have any post-secondary education. A slightly higher percentage of Blue Hills' residents are high school graduates, but the percentage of Blue Hills' residents who have only some high school education is almost double.

Population 25+ by Education Level

Education	Blue Hills	Kansas City
Elementary (0 – 8)	8.82%	6.95%
Some High School (9 – 11)	27.63%	14.25%
High School Graduate (12)	33.13%	30.16%
Some College (13 – 15)	17.95%	21.31%
Associates Degree Only	4.53%	5.29%
Bachelors Degree Only	5.91%	14.80%
Graduate Degree	2.03%	7.25%

The educational attainment of the population is an indicator of the quality of the labor market and can be positively correlated with income levels with earnings potential.

- Of the total population in the neighborhood, 2,517 persons were enrolled in school, including 144 persons in pre-primary school, 1,873 in elementary or high school and 500 persons enrolled in college.

Income and Employment Characteristics

- The median household income for the Blue Hills area is 77% of the City's median household income.
- The percentage of Blue Hills' households earning less than \$5,000 is twice the percentage found across the city.

Distribution of Household Income and Median Household Income (2001 Estimate)

Income	Blue Hills Area	Kansas City
\$75,000 and over	9.72%	18.11%
\$50,000 - 74,999	17.33%	19.83%
\$49,999 – 35,000	16.31%	17.59%
\$34,999 – 25,000	15.56%	13.85%
\$24,999 – 15,000	15.84%	13.88%
\$14,999 – 5,000	15.28%	11.95%
\$5,000 and under	9.95%	4.79%
Median Household Income	\$30,731	\$39,720

- The percentage of unemployed Blue Hills' residents is almost twice the percentage of unemployed residents across the city.

Population 16+ by Employment Status (2001 Estimate)

Employment Status	Blue Hills Area	Kansas City
Employed in Armed Forces	0.07%	0.18%
Employed Civilians	55.45%	62.7%
Unemployed Civilians	9.27%	4.9%
Not in labor force	35.21%	32.22%

- The percentages of Blue Hills' residents in executive and managerial positions, professional specialty occupations, sales, and protective services are lower than percentages for all of Kansas City's residents.
- The percentage of Blue Hills' residents in service occupation(s) is more than twice the percentage seen for all of Kansas City's residents.

Population 16+ by Occupation

Occupation	Blue Hills Area	Kansas City
Executive and Managerial	3.89%	12.20%
Professional Specialty	8.01%	14.34%
Technical Support	3.97%	3.86%
Sales	7.60%	11.29%
Administrative Support	19.18%	20.33%
Service: Private Household	0.44%	0.39%
Service: Protective	0.94%	2.10%
Service: Other	25.27%	12.62%
Farming Forestry and Fishing	0.21%	0.74%
Precision Production and Craft	9.07%	8.49%
Machine Operator	9.57%	5.79%
Trans. & Material Moving	6.05%	3.79%
Laborers	5.81%	4.06%

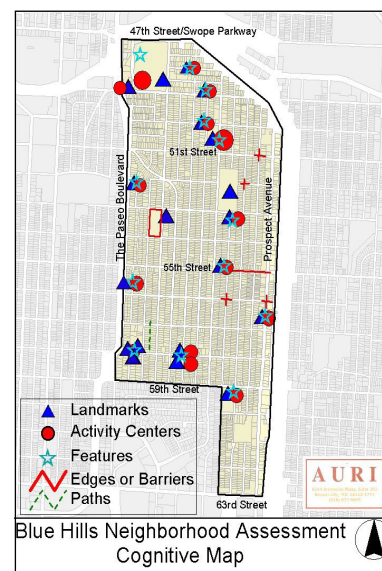
The demographic analysis of the Blue Hills neighborhood illustrates that the neighborhood is below the Kansas City median in most areas. The population and number of households in Blue Hills declined from 1980 to 1990. While the population decline did slow from 1990 to 2001, the number of households declined even more significantly in that time period. The percentage of households headed by a female with no husband present is nearly half of the total number of family households in Blue Hills. The median income is 23% below that of the City median; the most notable differences occur at the highest and lowest income levels. Unemployment is more than double in Blue Hills compared to Kansas City. Resident occupations are largely service or support oriented. Stable factors from 1980 to 2001 have been race and age distribution.

BLUE HILLS FOCUS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSESSMENT

The *Blue Hills FOCUS Neighborhood Assessment* involved approximately 70 people from the neighborhood, city staff, area institutions and businesses. The participants identified themselves with a neighborhood type and defined strategies to improve the community of Blue Hills through a charting process to list issues and goals.

The Blue Hills Neighborhood is committed to a healthy community. The community has evidenced this with a strong Community Action Network Center (CAN), the establishment of the “100 Men of Blue Hills,” and willpower to face the challenges to take action for change.

Workshop participants identified how they experience their neighborhood, and were asked to consider those things they want to protect, preserve or enhance in the neighborhood. In a closer examination of the area, the



participants used a base map to locate and mark landmarks, paths, activity centers, districts, edges or barriers and features providing a look at the internal structure of the neighborhood. The cognitive map on the previous page combined with the following matrix provides a description of the elements identified by the Blue Hills neighborhood:

Elements	Definition	Elements as Identified by the Neighborhood
Landmarks	Significant physical objects, like buildings or signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Blue Hills Park ▪ Many Churches ▪ Blue Hills Neighborhood Association House, 5309 Woodland ▪ Paseo Academy, 47th and Flora Avenue ▪ St. Monica's School, 58th and Euclid Avenue ▪ St. Therese's Catholic School ▪ Frances Willard School ▪ The Citadel Building ▪ J.J. Pershing School ▪ Daycare at 55th and Woodland
Paths	Routes people use to get places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The walking path between Woodland & Highland, 57th and 58th Street ▪ The city sidewalk on 49th Terrace
Activity Centers	Gathering places to do some activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Swope Parkway Library ▪ Paradise Baptist Church ▪ St. James United Methodist Church ▪ YMCA
Districts	Areas of recognizable character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Citadel neighborhood ▪ Metro Shopping Center ▪ Prospect business corridor (47th to 63rd Street)
Edges or Barriers	A limit or boundary that prevents people for enjoying the neighborhood or something in it	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Little Sisters of the Poor (54th and Woodland) ▪ 55th Street from Park to Prospect ▪ 52nd & Olive Street, residents avoid passing the dilapidated drug house ▪ 51st and Wabash, residents avoid walking past the trashy, vacant houses
Features	Things people like and would like to preserve or enhance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Many churches ▪ Paseo Academy ▪ Citadel Building

Additional challenges identified by the participants were:

- "White flight"
- Erosion of the economic base
- Abandoned and vacant property

A wish list for the neighborhood includes the following:

- Grocery store
- Maintain residential character and increase homeownership
- Turn vacant lots into park space

- Establish a partnership with the metro shopping center tenants

The neighborhood type was voted as *Stabilization*, indicating that Blue Hills is an established neighborhood with a sense of place. Still, there are transitions in residence and business, maintenance of property is declining, and cooperative efforts are becoming more difficult to forge.

To improve the neighborhood the residents outlined actions to take individually, jointly, and to delegate to the city. Priorities for the Blue Hills Neighborhood were named as the following:

- Encourage resident participation in neighborhood and community projects
- Maintain and improve city services
- Promote business and economic development

Altogether, the assessment process and resulting information are central in guiding strategic direction to encourage a healthier Blue Hills Neighborhood.

ISSUES INVENTORY

Community Forums were held with the residents of the Blue Hills Neighborhood in 2001. In its planning sessions the Community Forum attendees discussed neighborhood and development issues relevant to the Blue Hills Neighborhood.



Participants in Community Forum

These issues have been used as guides for the planning process that followed, emphasizing resident involvement as an intrinsic value of a neighborhood plan. These issues reflect the perceptions of the residents that the planning team then evaluated with data. The issues are listed by category below.

Economic Issues

The lack of quality commercial development and the need for beautification of the existing commercial centers are of specific concern to community members. Particular problems identified by the group are:

- Lack of local shopping opportunities (Metro Shopping Center is inferior)
- Beautification on Prospect: storefronts
- Paved parking lots
- Pave and clean parking lots
- Very bad grocery store
- Commercial businesses need to be checked for compliance with zoning and license
- Close motel on Prospect



Holiday Motel on Prospect Avenue

Infrastructure Issues

Drainage and catch basins have been noted as the most significant infrastructure problems in the Blue Hills Neighborhood. The detailed list is as follows:

- Potholes need filling
- Neighborhood needs a bridge at Woodland and Brush Creek
- Town Fork Creek: Clean-up, catch basin maintenance and cover-up (60th & Wabash)
- Clean debris out of sewers more frequently
- Sidewalk repair (investigate European sidewalk technique)
- Fix potholes
- 47th Terrace: Vacant area that dead-ends into Bruce R. Watkins; drainage issues



60th and Wabash

Housing Issues

Though the neighborhood has had many notable improvements in housing condition, the following list illustrates the remaining problems plaguing the area:

- Absentee landlords
- Identify landlords who are out of town/state/region
- Section 8
 - Concerned about management
 - Section 8 housing standards need to be kept
 - Some people don't want to use Section 8 because they don't want to adhere to the guidelines
 - Identify what is and is not Section 8 within the neighborhood
- Eliminate dangerous buildings
- Prepare for single-family homes
- Abandoned and vacant housing
- Vacant housing with illegal dwellers (2120 E 58th Street); board them up better or tear them down



53rd Street and Wayne Avenue

Health and Safety Issues

Specific health and safety issues identified by the community members are:

- Increase safety in neighborhood
- Increase police protection
- Timely enforcement on code violations
- Better follow through on code violations



59th Street

- Increase police protection and patrol of vacant areas, notably 58th and Brooklyn
- Better park patrol
- Enforce leash law, especially in Blue Hills Park, stray dogs, understaffed at Animal Control and Humane Society
- Street basketball players cause many safety issues

Aesthetic & Maintenance Issues

The general aesthetic of the area is being undermined by a number of factors. The appearance of vacant lots and abandoned cars are cited as the most obvious examples. The following list details specific issues noted by participants.

- Gateway markers or banners on poles at major intersections
- Beautification of the vacant lots throughout the neighborhood
- Streets are being used as car lots (55th and Woodland)
- Rental property: parked cars in front yards
- Absentee landlords for multi-family and single-family do not up keep their property and many live out of the region
- Remove graffiti
- Increase upkeep of vacant lots
- Sweep curbs more frequently
- Large bins, as Brookside has, for recycling
- Eviction trash removed more quickly
- Increase street sweeping/cleaning
- Survey of most common properties for illegal dumping
- Post signs for illegal dumping and enforce
- Clean main corridors
- Advertise and increase amount of bulk pick-ups
- Sign replacement, and upkeep of streets after vandalism
- Removal of abandoned cars
- Increased and better publicized bulk trash pick-up
- Dead tree removal
- Regular park clean-up
- Larger and permanent trash receptacles on vacant lots and public areas
- Enforce business parking lot clean-ups, especially along Prospect Avenue
- Move abandoned cars
- Pigeons roosting in roof tops and unsanitary droppings



Abandoned cars on Park Avenue

Traffic Issues

The group identified several specific areas where traffic control needs attention. These include:

- Street signs on Swope Parkway and Woodland Avenue

- Traffic controls: Children crossing at Prospect and Woodland, 51st Street, and 59th Street; no stop signs; may need speed bumps
- Study light rail placement
- Decrease speed limits throughout the neighborhood (47th Street Terrace)
- Use of speed bumps in high pedestrian traffic areas (Brooklyn Park)

Development Issues

Residents stated their wishes that the Blue Hills Neighborhood retain a low-density atmosphere, while investigating opportunities for the construction of new single-family homes. The issues below relate to that desire:

- Continue to downzone to R1
- Preserve residential usage on The Paseo Boulevard and Swope Parkway and prevent commercial development
- Inventory of Land Trust properties and properties in ATA right-of-way
 - Trade frontage for side lot
 - Trade MoDOT lots for more frontage, thus saving Brommel's house
- Place the transit plan in context of the neighborhood
- Identify how TIF will affect Blue Hills
- Possibility of rail projects planned along Bruce R. Watkins, especially at 48th Terrace and along Volker Boulevard



The Paseo Boulevard

Neighborhood Issues

As listed, the issues affecting the Blue Hills neighborhood range from the need for a community center to increased participation of residents. The full list of neighborhood issues includes:

- Pursue idea of Charter School in Blue Hills
- Community Center: pool, facility for speakers, support all ages, theater
- High percentage of people on parole or probation: Need to have programs to incorporate those citizens into the community
- Who should people contact about buying vacant lots adjoining their property
- Use entities within the neighborhood: Bus kids to Brush Creek Community Center
- More faith-based involvement (a lot of churches in the area that need to be more involved)
- Citizenship: people need to be involved
- People's attitudes when confronted
- Lack of communication: People talk to their neighbors
- Residents meet at a center
- Community Center
- Mailbox at 52nd & Brookwood

- Walkway for seniors in Blue Hills Park
- Development of senior services
- Input on 63rd Street Plan
- Use vacant lots for basketball or other recreational activities
- Circulate the City services contact booklet
- Loud noise

At Community Forum #2, residents were asked to prioritize important issues affecting their neighborhood. The chart below lists the priorities that have been established by the participants. The issues discussed can be classified as both physical and socio-economic and were presented as both existing problems and potential solutions.

Prioritized Issues	
Economic Issues	<input type="checkbox"/> Beautification on Prospect <input type="checkbox"/> Close motel on Prospect <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial businesses need to be checked for compliance with zoning and license
Infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/> Sidewalk repair (investigate European technique) <input type="checkbox"/> Bridge at Woodland and Brush Creek
Housing	<input type="checkbox"/> Absentee landlords <input type="checkbox"/> Section 8 standards need to be kept <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare for single-family homes
Health and Safety	<input type="checkbox"/> Stray dogs <input type="checkbox"/> Timely enforcement on code violations <input type="checkbox"/> Street basketball players cause many safety issues
Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Preserve residential usage on Paseo & Swope Pkwy, prevent commercial development
Aesthetic & Maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/> Beautification of vacant lots <input type="checkbox"/> Parked cars in yards of rental property <input type="checkbox"/> Absentee landlords and their property maint. <input type="checkbox"/> Pigeons roosting and droppings <input type="checkbox"/> Post signs and enforce for illegal dumping <input type="checkbox"/> Increase street sweeping <input type="checkbox"/> Increased and better publicized bulk trash pick-up
Traffic	<input type="checkbox"/> Street signs on Swope and Woodland <input type="checkbox"/> Decrease speed limits <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic controls, not signs
Neighborhood	<input type="checkbox"/> Community center <input type="checkbox"/> Walkway for seniors <input type="checkbox"/> Who to contact for buying adj. vacant lots <input type="checkbox"/> Community center mailbox at 52 & Brookwood Avenue <input type="checkbox"/> Use vacant lots for recreation <input type="checkbox"/> Loud noise

An analysis of the issues voiced at the community forums and the FOCUS Neighborhood Assessment demonstrate the community's need for:

- Infrastructure improvements specifically for drainage issues
- Traffic control measures
- Increased connectivity between residents
- Preservation of single-family character of the community
- Appropriate commercial activity along Prospect Avenue

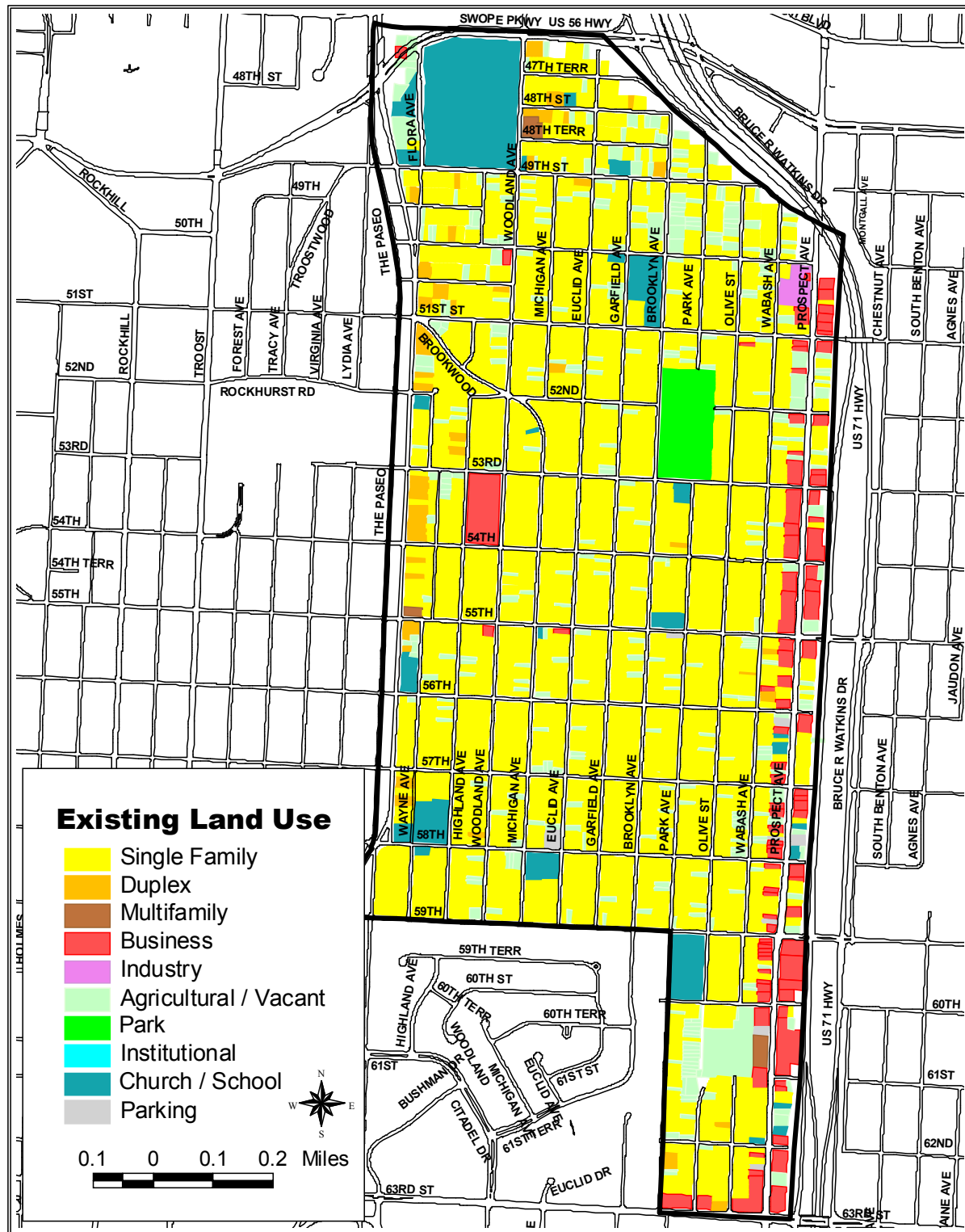
LIVABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

Existing Land Use

Existing land use was determined from the City of Kansas City, Missouri GIS database. It should be noted that the data used to determine percentage of land use is based on ownership of individual properties (i.e. addresses/parcels) rather than on a calculation of actual land area.

Property containing single-family housing accounts for 70% of existing land use, with vacant lot residential (at 11%) as the second highest category of land use. Existing land use is summarized in table below and the Existing Land Use Map on the following page.

Land Use	Acres	%
Single-family	363.8	70%
Vacant	57.5	11%
Church/School	39.0	8%
Business	32.4	6%
Duplex	11.2	2%
Park	10.4	2%
Industry	1.9	0%
Multi-family	1.8	0%
Parking Lot	1.7	0%
Total	518.0	100%



Current Adopted Land Use

The map at right illustrates current adopted land use from the *South Central Area Plan* and *Town Fork Creek Area Plan*, provided by the City Planning & Development Department.

The *South Central Area Plan* and the *Town Fork Creek Area Plan* were among those analyzed in the previous section of this report. The following is a summary of the recommendations pertaining to land use.

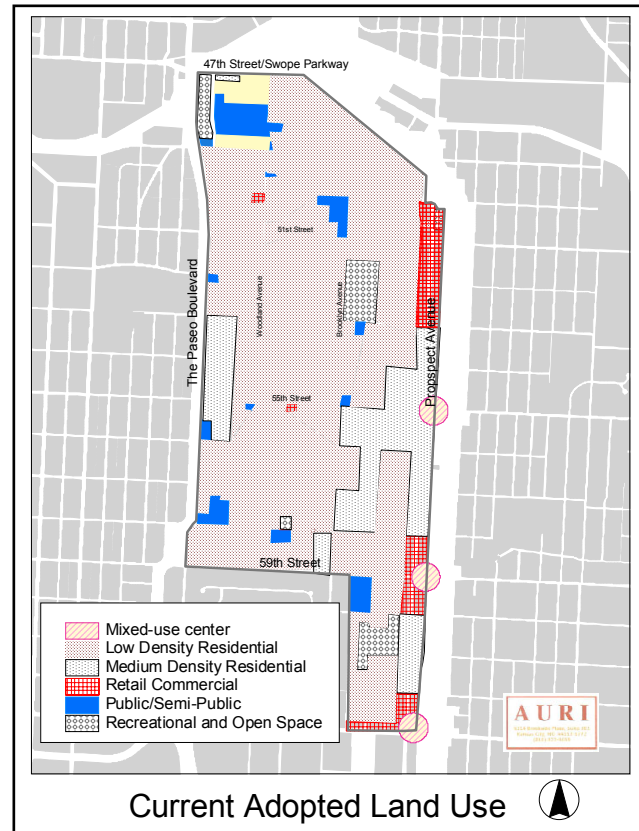
The *Urban Core Plan* emphasizes the need for mixed-use centers. "Land-use patterns throughout the urban core should shift away from the strip commercial development to nodal development, or mixed-centers, in which commercial development is allowed to occur at the full depth of the block at significant intersections." (*FOCUS Urban Core Plan*, pg.43) Elements of Mixed-Use Centers include:

- Preservation and re-use of sound and historically valuable buildings
- Infill commercial buildings for both retail and office uses; retail facilities can include grocery, pharmacy, cleaners, restaurants and others serving the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Low to mid-rise apartment buildings on the perimeter of the center
- A multi-modal transit hub that integrates day-care facilities
- Community policing including police walking the beat and the bicycle patrol
- A "FOCUS Center" for community gatherings and efficient delivery of City, social and other services

The *FOCUS Kansas City Plan* recommends mixed-use centers at 59th and Prospect and 55th and Prospect, as well as along the 63rd Street Corridor.

According to the *South Central Area Plan*, future use of the Blue Hills Neighborhood should:

...continue to be a residential area that is located near a variety of facilities that support the residential environment. Elements that contribute to this function include: maintenance and investment in facilities that surround the area, maintenance of the convenience and access to these facilities, stabilization of



the population characteristics, continuation of programs for conservation and rehabilitation, preservation of single-family dwellings as the dominant land use, sustaining a positive and active relationship among area residents and the institutions, and providing additional park space.

This plan specifically identifies the Blue Hills Neighborhood study area as “a Conservation and Rehabilitation area wherein programs focus upon residential maintenance improvement, a rehabilitation loan program, and improvements to streets, curbs and gutters.” Other recommendations affecting the Blue Hills Neighborhood include:

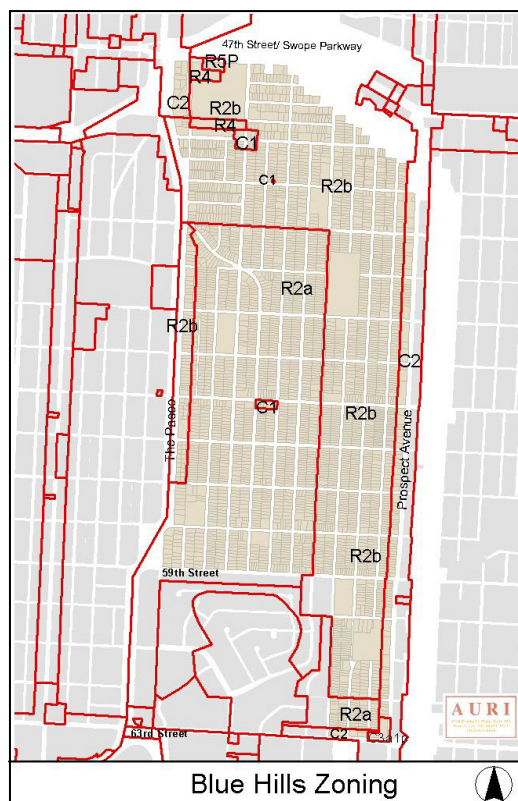
- **The single-family residential environment should be preserved.** Two-family dwellings will remain a secondary residential land use. Conversion of single-family into two-family dwellings presently permitted in R2b can be prevented by rezoning from R2b to R1b (single-family).
- **Businesses should be retained at the edge of the area and examine the creation of a cluster commercial development.** Most of the commercial land uses are located at the fringe of the area along major streets. Commercial rehabilitation and retention will strengthen and preserve the single-family oriented nature of the area and encourage support of businesses by area residents. The creation of cluster commercial centers at intersections with the Bruce R. Watkins Roadway would be a convenience to both roadway users and residents.
- **The appearance of the area should be improved** through a continuous exterior/grounds inspection, maintenance and improvement to sidewalks, curbs and gutters, rehabilitation of structures needing repair and demolition of substandard structures.

In the conclusions of the *South Central Area Plan*, specific actions needed to ensure conservation and maintenance of the residential areas are outlined. These include:

- R1b zoning should be the dominant residential zoning classification.
- Neighborhood property conservation programs should be operated between Troost and Prospect Avenue, 47th to 63rd Street.
- Dangerous buildings should be demolished.
- A neighborhood recreational center and additional park space should be provided (south of 55th Street).
- Public improvements should be systematically monitored and provided north of 51st Street between the Paseo and Prospect Avenue.
- Symbols, entrance identification markers, and landscaping should be constructed at key sites.

Zoning

Zoning regulates what uses are allowed on particular sites including: building height, density, land use, lot dimensions/setbacks, parking, and signage. The predominant zoning designations in the study area are R2a and R2b, two-family dwelling units. Allowable uses in R2a and R2b include single and two family dwellings. Current zoning patterns do not reflect the desires of the community. Allowable uses for R2b include all uses allowed in the less intensive residential zones.



Allowable Uses for R2b Zoning

Unrestricted	Restricted	Conditional Uses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-family dwelling units Two-family dwelling units Public parks and recreational facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nurseries and gardens Group housing and community units Fire stations and water/sewer facilities Golf course Mobile homes Temporary radio/television towers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Churches and synagogues Community centers Police stations Public libraries, museums and art galleries Public schools

Housing¹

Housing indicators show substantial variation between the Blue Hills area and Kansas City as a whole.

- Blue Hills has more single-family housing than the city as a whole.

Housing Type

	Blue Hills	Kansas City
Single Family	89.2%*	61.2%
Multifamily	10.8%*	38.8%

*(2,981 year round units in structure)

¹ 1990 Census, © 2001 Claritas, Inc.

- Blue Hills is comparable to Kansas City in terms of occupied and vacant housing units.

Occupancy

	Blue Hills	Kansas City
Occupied	90.51%	88.02%
Vacant	9.49%	11.98 %

- Blue Hills has a higher rate of owner occupancy than does the city as a whole. Higher rates of owner occupancy can be associated with more stable communities.

Housing Tenure

	Blue Hills	Kansas City
Owner Occupied	65.6%	55.8%
Rental	34.4%	44.2%

- The median value of owner-occupied homes in the Blue Hills area is 48 percent lower than the median property value for homes across the city.
- Median rents in Blue Hills are just under 19 percent of rents for the city.

Median Property Value & Median Rent

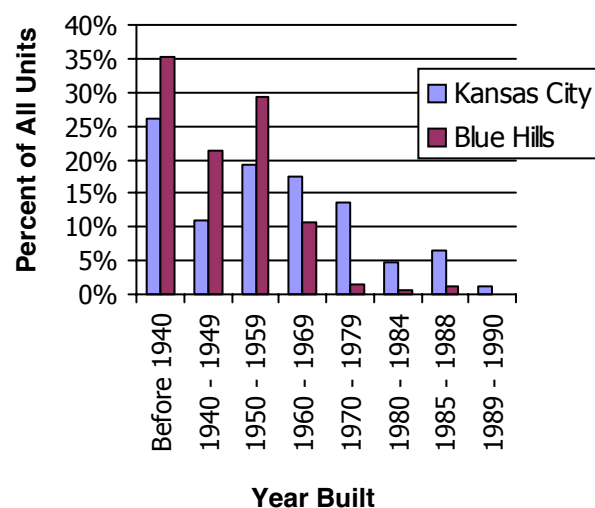
	Blue Hills	Kansas City	% Difference
Median Property Value	\$44,480	\$85,954	-48.2%
Median Rent	\$263	\$324	-18.8%

- More than half of Blue Hill's housing was built before 1950.

Age of Housing (Year Built, All Dwelling Units)

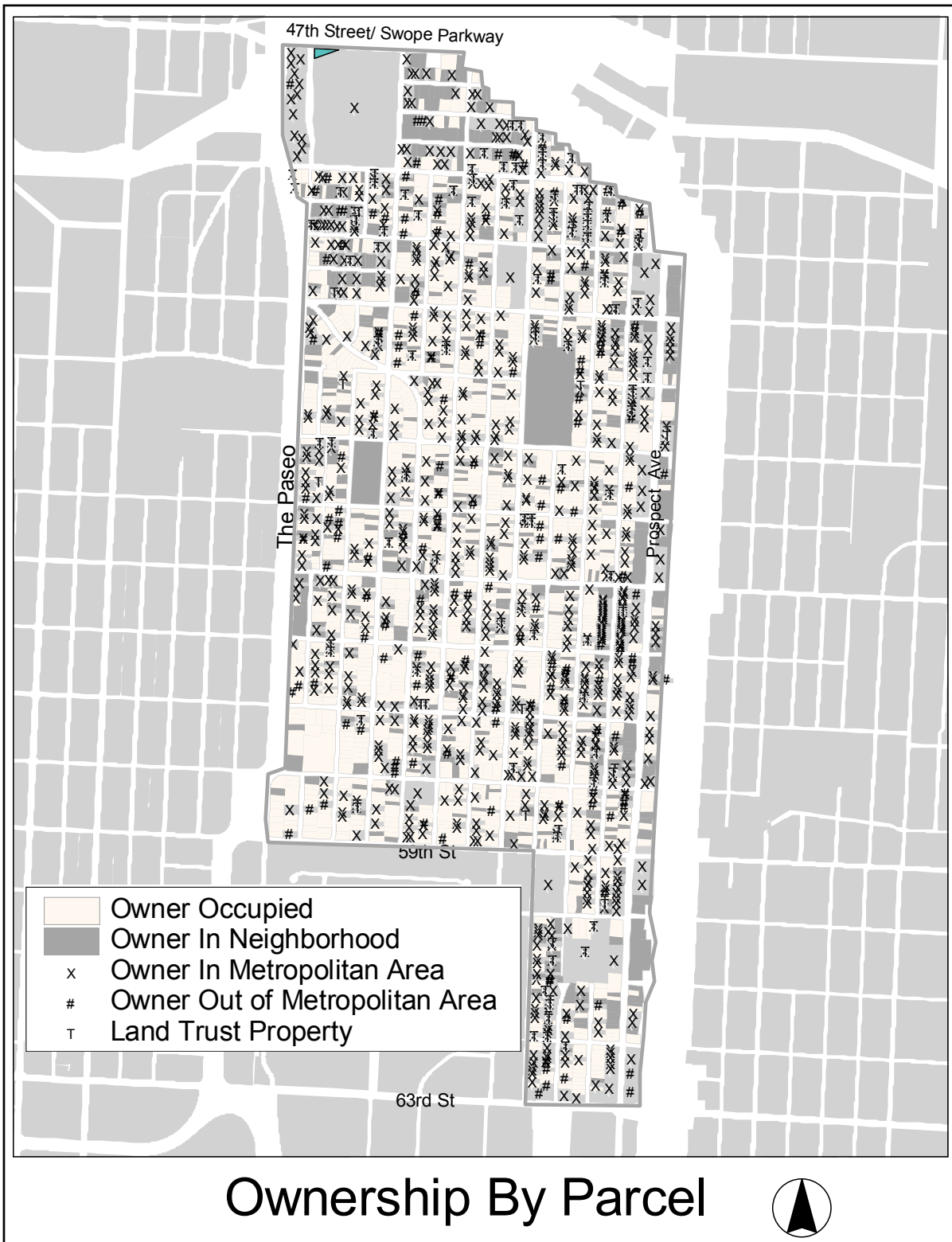
Year Built	Blue Hills	Kansas City
Before 1940	35.18%	26.14%
1940 – 1949	21.48%	11.03%
1950 – 1959	29.41%	19.29%
1960 – 1969	10.57%	17.52%
1970 – 1979	1.41%	13.54%
1980 - 1984	0.62%	4.69%
1985 - 1988	1.32%	6.62%
1989 - 1990	0%	1.16%
Total	2,724	177,601

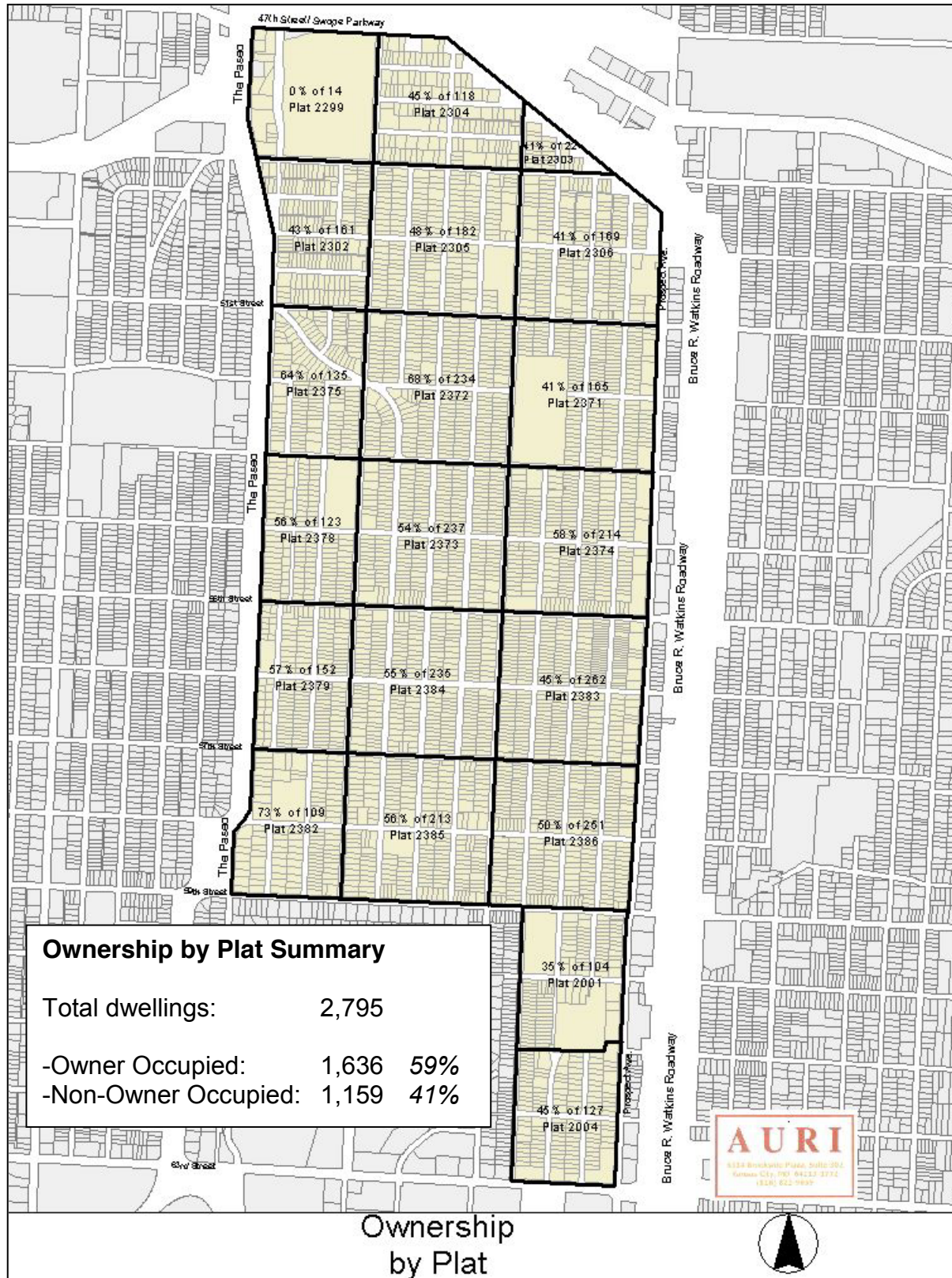
Age of Housing (Year Built, All Dwelling Units)



- Based on GIS data provided by the City of Kansas City, Missouri, the Blue Hills Neighborhood is primarily made up of owner occupied single-family homes. The areas of owner occupied single-family housing are most concentrated in the central

sections of Blue Hill. The amount of non-owner occupied housing increases on the periphery, specifically Prospect Avenue, 47th Street/Swope Parkway and 63rd Street. A more detailed analysis of ownership is illustrated below.





Historic Resources

The Blue Hills Neighborhood has four sites designated with Historic Significance by the Landmarks Commission of Kansas City, Missouri. Those properties are listed below as well as illustrated in red on the map to the left.

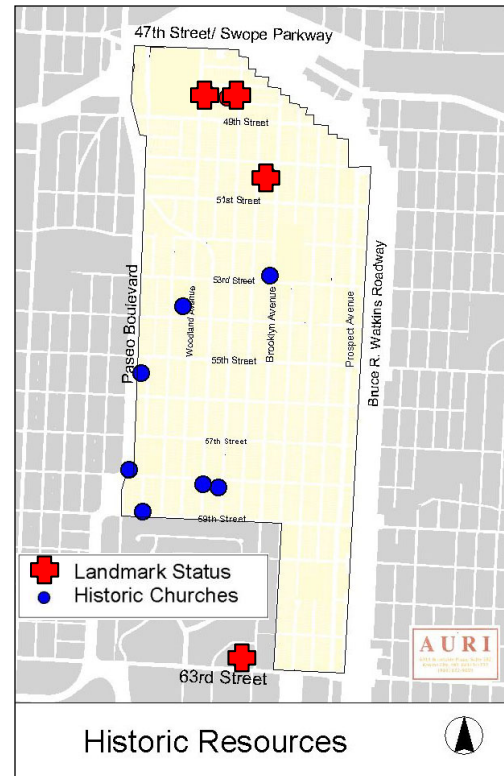
- Pendergast Mansion
- 1830 East 48th Terrace
- Francis E. Willard Elementary School
- Boone-Hays Cemetery

The Boone-Hays Cemetery, one-half block west of Brooklyn Avenue on 63rd Street was part of the farmland of Daniel Morgan Boone, son of American pioneer Daniel Boone. This cemetery contains at least ten members of the Boone family.

Many churches in the Blue Hills Neighborhood are contributing factors in the historic integrity of the community and are pinpointed in blue on the map to the right.

- Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church
- St. James United Methodist Church
- St. Therese of the Little Flower
- St. Monica Church
- The former site of Little Sisters of the Poor
- St. George's Parish House

The Blue Hills Neighborhood has many older and architecturally significant homes that could possibly be added to the Local Register of Historic Places once a historic survey of the area is conducted. The FOCUS Plan For Meaningful Communities cites the Blue Hills Neighborhood as a Priority Three area that should receive a historic resources survey in the next fifteen years.



Boone-Hays Cemetery



St. Therese of the Little Flower



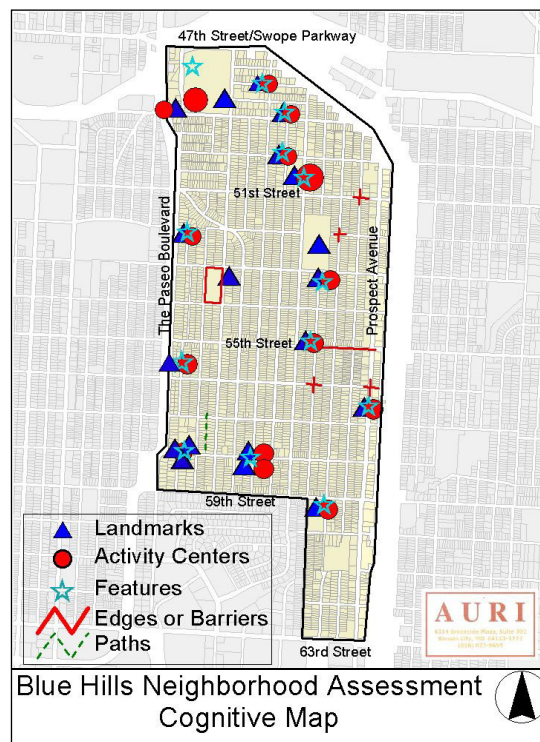
Original residence for the Order of the Little Sisters of the Poor



Pendergast Mansion

Urban Design Features

As discussed earlier, the study area is 89.2%² single-family residential. Housing in the Blue Hills Neighborhood ranges from mansion-style homes to bungalow-style homes. FOCUS has named three aspirations for healthy neighborhoods. “These three aspirations, connectedness, identity, and responsiveness, embody the creation and maintenance of strong people-centered neighborhoods in any area.” (*FOCUS Neighborhood Prototypes Plan* p. 22) Illustrated to the right are the many landmarks, paths, activity centers, districts, edges and features noted during the Blue Hills Neighborhood Assessment. These features within Blue Hills promote the FOCUS aspirations and bring a sense of belonging, connection, identity and value, responsibility and partnership³ to the Blue Hills neighborhood.



Housing Density

The Blue Hills Neighborhood housing density, overall, is 4 units per acre, placing the housing density within the low-density range of 0 to 7.2 units/acre range. The following breakdown provides more detail regarding the housing density in the various sections of the Blue Hills Neighborhood:

- North Area (north of 53rd): 2.9 units/acre
- Central Area (53rd to 59th): 4.7 units/acre
- South Area (south of 59th): 2.7 units/acre

These densities are based on entire area, including streets, parks, and non-residential uses. The density of actual residential parcels would be higher.

Northeast Blue Hills

North of 50th Street much of the housing stock is comprised of large-scale housing, including the Pendergast Mansion. These homes encompass many architectural styles including Colonial Revival and Spanish Revival. While these properties were built on larger lots they still have an urban feel. The majority of frontages on residential properties range from approximately 50 ft. to 100 ft.



1830 East 48th Street

² 89.2% of 2,981 year round units in structure, 1990 Census, © 2001 Claritas Inc.

³ *FOCUS Neighborhood Prototypes Plan*, pages 22-26.

Southern Blue Hills

South of 50th Street is primarily smaller single-family houses, many of which have intact features from the Arts and Crafts movement. The area has many bungalows that are approximately 1,300-1,600 sq. ft. The majority of frontages on residential properties range from approximately 25 ft. to 50 ft.



5445 Garfield Avenue

Scenic Views

The northeast section has some of the more scenic views for the neighborhood. From the highest elevation one can see the downtown skyline, the Country Club Plaza and the Stadium Complex.



View looking east at 49th and Park

The urban design features of the Blue Hills neighborhood offer many incentives to developers, those living in Blue Hills, and those thinking of locating

to the neighborhood. Existing housing offers opportunities for housing for a variety of income levels.

The quality of housing, scenic views and location of the neighborhood could bring developers interested in:

- Single-family housing
- Multi-family housing
- Rehabilitation of existing housing

CHOICE IN TRANSPORTATION

The interior streets are primarily local streets that circulate traffic within the area and feed into secondary or primary arterials. Primary arterials, defined by the City's *Major Street Plan* as designed to carry 10,000 or more vehicles per day, include 63rd Street Trafficway, Swope Parkway, and The Paseo Boulevard.

Secondary arterials, designed to accommodate 5,000 to 10,000 vehicles per day, include Prospect Avenue and 55th Street. Both Swope Parkway and The Paseo Boulevard are designated as parkways, and Swope Parkway is also classified as an expressway. These major streets provide linkages to other parts of the city as well as access to the Blue Hills Neighborhood.



In addition, the recently completed Bruce R. Watkins Roadway runs parallel to and just east of Prospect Avenue. This freeway is also classified as a Special Purpose Rapid Transit Corridor. Bruce R. Watkins Roadway provides convenient access to the study area from points north and south. Entrances and exits along the study area corridor are:

- On/off access: Swope Pkwy, 55th, 59th, and 63rd Streets
- Bridge only, no access: 51st Street

The Blue Hills Neighborhood study area is served by seven KCATA/Metro Bus Routes, listed below:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ▪ Route 47: Roanoke | ▪ Route 163: 63 rd Street |
| ▪ Route 54: Armour-Paseo | ▪ Route 71: Prospect Avenue |
| ▪ Route 53: Armour-Swope Park | ▪ Route 155: 55 th Street |
| ▪ Route 158: Belton Express | |



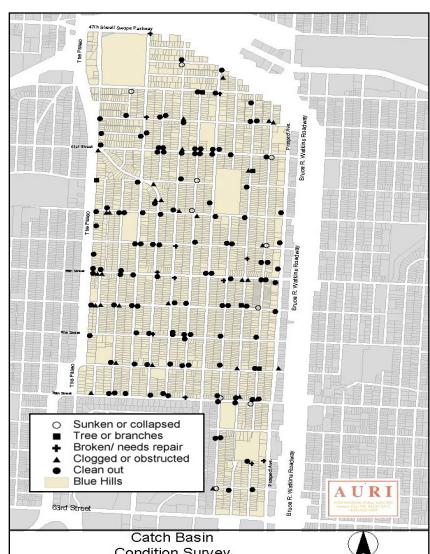
Blue Hills has adequate access to transportation routes; its borders include a primary arterial, a freeway, an expressway, and parkways. The neighborhood is well served by sidewalks, yet formalized pedestrian or bike trails linking to the metro area have not been established. FOCUS acknowledges that “Facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists (see Bikeway Plan, Figure 10) are generally incomplete or even non-existent in some areas.” (*FOCUS Physical Framework Plan*, p. 36) Bicycle and pedestrian paths create better circulation within a community as well as better interaction between community members.

CRITICAL RESOURCES

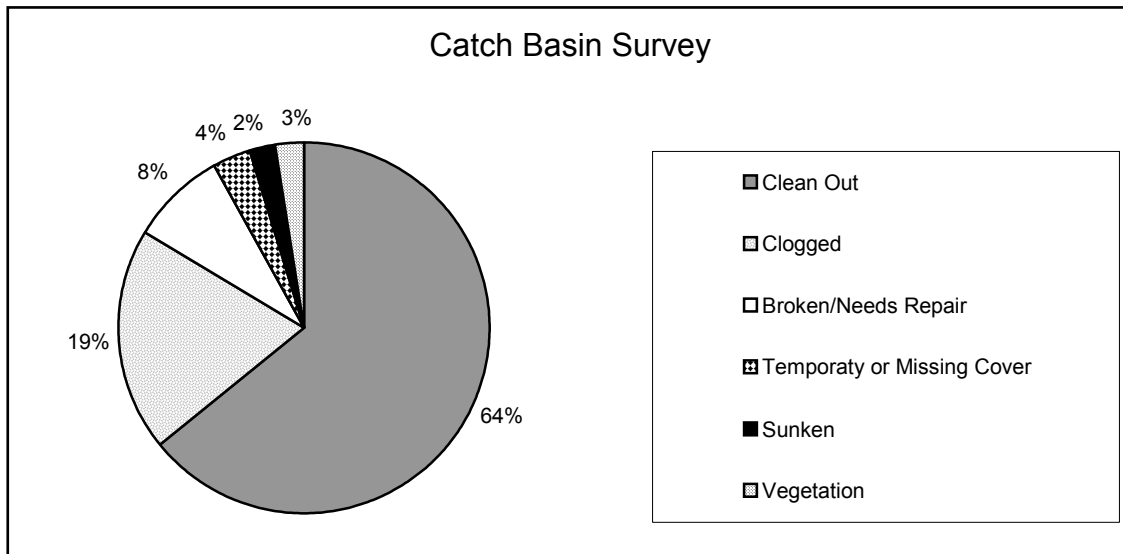
Drainage

Drainage issues throughout the Blue Hills Neighborhood are a deterrent to future development and a concern of the residents. In response to this concern a representative from the Mayor’s Office urged the residents to survey the drainage basins that were causing problems and submit the results of that survey to the Mayor’s Office as well as to their City Council Representatives. The subsequent information is a result of that survey.

As the map on the left and the chart on the next page illustrate, the majority of catch basins in the area have



been identified as causing problems. While 64% of the catch basins need general cleaning, 19% of the catch basins are completely clogged and not draining. 17% of the catch basins need more intense maintenance and repair.

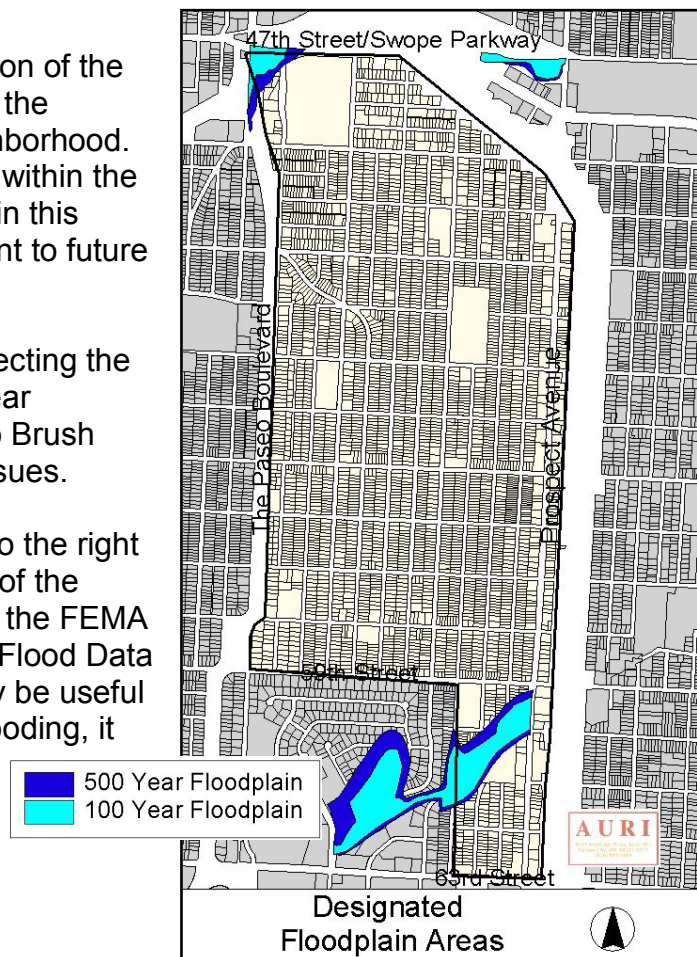


Flood Plain

Town Fork Creek, in the southern section of the neighborhood, is the primary source of the floodplain affecting the Blue Hills Neighborhood. Most of the area prone to flooding falls within the 100-year floodplain. Floodplain issues in this section of Blue Hills could be a deterrent to future development.

The secondary source of floodplain affecting the area is Brush Creek, also in the 100-year floodplain. The recent improvements to Brush Creek have mitigated these flooding issues.

The floodplains portrayed on the map to the right represent the approximate boundaries of the floodway and flood fringe shown within the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program Q3 Flood Data digital maps. Although this graphic may be useful for highlighting proximity to potential flooding, it cannot be used to assess the necessity for flood insurance or the certainty that a parcel or building lies within the floodway or flood fringe.



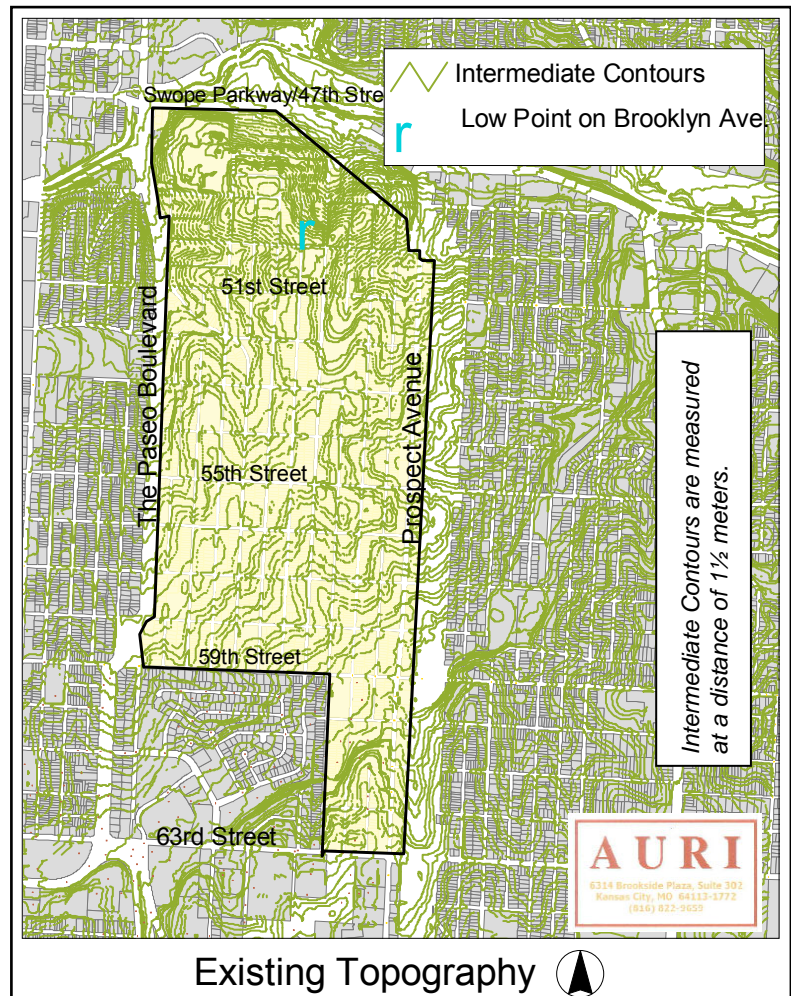
Topography

The topography of the northern section of Blue Hills reflects landforms typical of a river valley, with a wide variety of topographic features, including steep slopes, ravines, and limestone outcroppings. The elevated topography of the area has mitigated flooding issues, provides scenic views, and could be an incentive for future development. One exception to this is the low point on Brooklyn Avenue. While this low point is not within a flood plain, its topography makes it prone to drainage issues. These drainage issues are reflected in the lack of development of the 4900 block of Brooklyn Avenue.

Central Blue Hills has less severe topography. The area has gentle slopes that are not deterrents to development.

The southern section of the neighborhood has the landforms typical of the areas surrounding Town Fork Creek. This includes steep slopes, wooded areas, and ravines. These combined with floodplain issues are development obstacles.

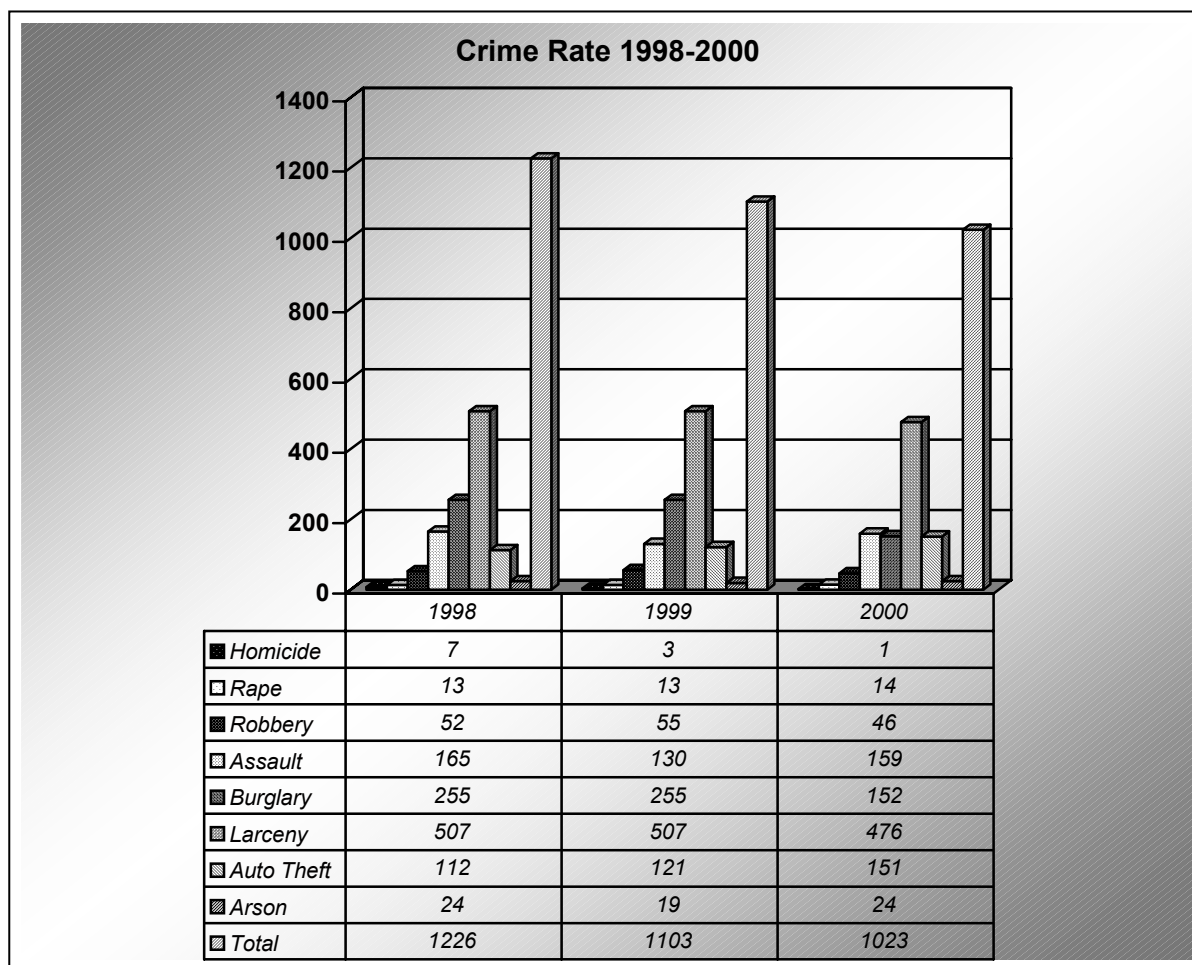
The overall topography for the Blue Hills neighborhood is an incentive to future development. Exceptions to this are the area surrounding Town Fork Creek and the 4900 block of Brooklyn Avenue. Topography issues could be mitigated to provide for future development.



4900 block of Brooklyn

SAFE CITY

The following chart and table illustrate the rate of crime in the Blue Hills Neighborhood for the years 1998, 1999, and 2000. As the chart illustrates, the overall crime rate for the neighborhood has been decreasing over the past three years. Most significant decreases are in the instances of homicide, robbery, burglary, and larceny. The most significant increase has been in auto theft cases.



During the first community forum residents voiced their concerns about health and safety issues. Residents would like to see changes in both real crime and the perception of safety through increased police patrol of the neighborhood, especially those areas with vacant parcels and Blue Hills Park. Both the perception of crime as well as real crime are having a negative effect on the Blue Hills Park. This park is underutilized due to the following negative activities and perceptions:

- The leash law is not enforced
- Littering
- Lack of visible law enforcement officials
- Perception of drug use

Property owners with code violations are also concerning residents. These code violations cause safety hazards for the community as a whole. Deteriorating and vacant properties provide opportunity for criminal behavior, health and safety hazards, and detract from the Blue Hills neighborhood. Increased police patrol, code enforcement, a Walkers on Watch program and targeted infill and rehabilitated housing could aid in decreasing real and perceived crime.

BUSINESS & DEVELOPMENT

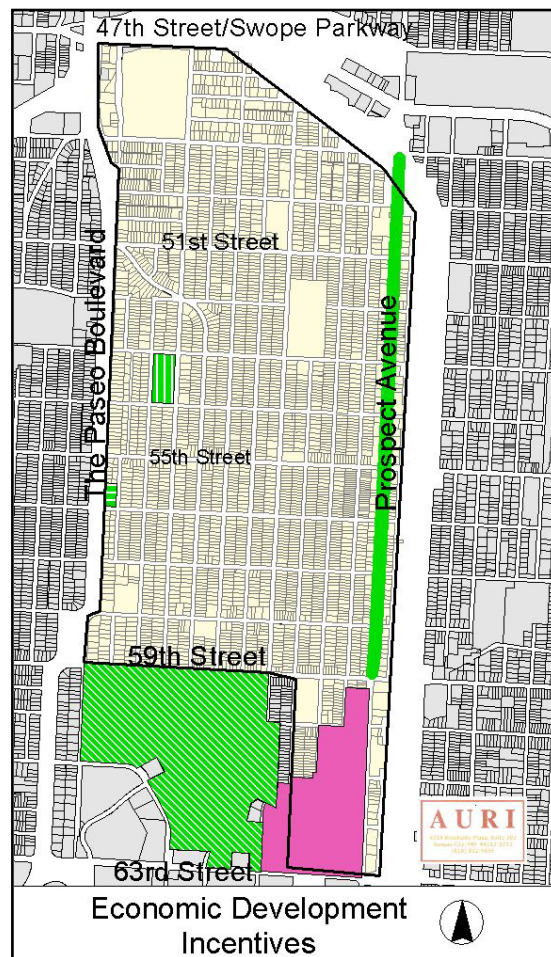
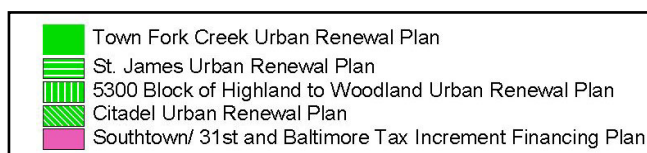
Economic Development Tools

Four areas within the Blue Hills neighborhood currently have economic development incentives in place. Those areas are:

- Town Fork Creek Urban Renewal Plan
- St. James Urban Renewal Plan
- 5300 Block of Highland to Woodland Urban Renewal Plan
- Southtown/31st and Baltimore Tax Increment Financing Plan

The Land Clearance For Redevelopment Authority of Kansas City, Missouri designates the Urban Renewal areas. The Urban Renewal designation allows for tax abatement for 10 years, and the designations themselves have a life of thirty years.

Tax Increment Financing diverts local and state taxes for up to 23 years to pay for a broad range of development costs, including infrastructure and environmental remediation.



Commercial Activity

The dominant commercial activity in the Blue Hills neighborhood is located on Prospect Avenue and 63rd Street. The Metro Plaza Shopping Center offers grocery and other retail services. The commercial activity along Prospect Avenue includes restaurants, automotive repair and salvage, motel, day care and dry cleaning services. More than 50% of the property on Prospect Avenue is not occupied by



55th Street and Prospect Avenue

local owners. Poor property maintenance on Prospect can be correlated to absentee owners. Some of these services are not in compliance with the *FOCUS Kansas City* designation as a Residential Great Street, including: auto salvage, and light industrial uses. “The *Urban Core Plan* calls for the revitalization of the boulevards and the designation of a network of Great Streets where the City will focus investment and target incentives to upgrade infrastructure, enhance the streetscape and encourage activity that is attractive to pedestrians.” (*Urban Core Plan*, p.19) The beautification of Prospect Avenue was an issue raised by residents in the first and second community forum.

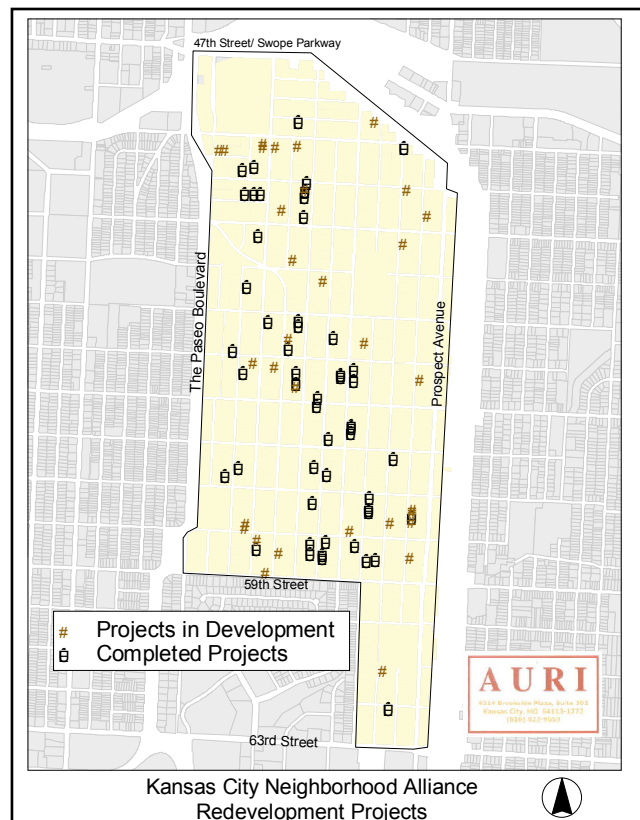
The area has a small neighborhood retail center, located at 55th Street and Euclid Avenue, containing a grocery/convenience store with the remaining stores unoccupied. The strip center is currently underutilized.

Development Activities

Kansas City Neighborhood Alliance has targeted the Blue Hills neighborhood with a Neighborhood Preservation Initiative (NPI). This NPI has the following five-point strategy:

1. Diminish crime in the area by partnering with the assigned CAN officers and Blue Hills Neighborhood Association
2. Identifying the leadership in the community and providing leadership training
3. Training renters to become homeowners
4. Providing homes for interested buyers
5. Providing quality contractors for new construction and rehab

Currently, Kansas City Neighborhood Alliance has completed rehabilitation and sold forty-nine single-family homes, with fourteen under construction or in development.





St. James expansion

St. James United Methodist Church is undergoing an expansion. This expansion includes:

- Improved parking
- 1200 seat sanctuary
- Offices
- Classrooms

Ongoing development activities in Blue Hills demonstrate the stabilization of the neighborhood. This stabilization could be increased with targeted housing and commercial development that accents the positive qualities while addressing the needs of the community.

SUMMARY

The analysis of development factors in the Blue Hills neighborhood reinforces issues raised during the Community Forums. Blue Hills is a stabilizing neighborhood that offers quality affordable housing. The integrity of the housing stock combined with access to the transportation system and its location within the greater Kansas City area gives opportunity for continued development opportunities. Increasing pedestrian connections and infrastructure improvements in conjunction with reinforcement of the single-family character of Blue Hills would provide additional incentives for development.

People First: Demographics

The demographic analysis of the Blue Hills neighborhood illustrates that the neighborhood is below the Kansas City median in most areas. Indicating a need for affordable housing and market rate housing opportunities. Also indicated is the need for both professional and support/service employment opportunities. The demographics that significantly indicate these needs are:

- The population and households have been in decline for 20 years.
- Family households account for three-quarters of the households in Blue Hills, with a nearly double the rate of female-headed family households with no husband present and 25% fewer married couples when compared to Kansas City.
- The median income is below that of the City median; the most notable differences occur at the highest and lowest income levels.
- Unemployment is more than double in Blue Hills compared to Kansas City. Resident occupations are largely service or support oriented.

Blue Hills FOCUS Neighborhood Assessment

The FOCUS Neighborhood Assessment of Blue Hills neighborhood involved people from the neighborhood, City staff, area institutions and businesses. Through a charting process to list issues and goals, the participants identified themselves with a neighborhood type and defined strategies to improve the community. Priority issues identified by the Blue Hills residents during this process:

- Encourage resident participation in neighborhood and community projects
- Maintain and improve City services
- Promote business and economic development

Issues Inventory

Community Forums were held with the residents of the Blue Hills neighborhood. In planning sessions the Community Forum attendees discussed neighborhood and development issues relevant to the Blue Hills neighborhood. These issues were used as guides for the planning process that followed, emphasizing resident involvement as an intrinsic value of a neighborhood plan. Some of the key issues from the issues inventory are:

- Infrastructure improvements, specifically for drainage issues
- Traffic control measures
- Increased connectivity between residents
- Preservation of single-family character of the community
- Appropriate commercial activity along Prospect Avenue

Neighborhood Livability

The dominant use of land in the Blue Hills Neighborhood is single-family residential, with a higher owner occupancy rate than the rest of the city as a whole. This is reflected in the existing land use and Current Adopted Land Use. However, the existing land use as well as zoning on Prospect Avenue is not in compliance with the Current Adopted Land Use. Zoning within the Blue Hills neighborhood reflects a higher density level than what is recommended by Current Adopted Land Use.

The Blue Hills Neighborhood has four sites designated as Historically Significant by the Landmarks Commission of the City of Kansas City, Missouri, as well as many older and architecturally significant properties that could be added to the Local Register of Historic Places.

The housing stock ranges from large, mansion-style single family homes to smaller bungalow-style single family homes. The northeast section has views of downtown, the stadium complex, and the County Club Plaza. This provides opportunities and incentives for future development.

Choice in Transportation

The interior streets are primarily local streets that circulate traffic within the area and feed into secondary or primary arterials. Primary arterials include 63rd Street Trafficway, Swope Parkway, and The Paseo Boulevard. Secondary arterials include Prospect Avenue and 55th Street. Both Swope Parkway and The Paseo Boulevard are designated as parkways, and Swope Parkway is also classified as an expressway. In addition, the recently completed Bruce R. Watkins Roadway runs parallel to and just

east of Prospect Avenue from 63rd Street to Swope Parkway. This roadway is classified as both a freeway and a Special Purpose Rapid Transit Corridor.

These major streets provide linkages to other parts of the city as well as access to the Blue Hills Neighborhood. However, Blue Hills is lacking linkages for pedestrian and bicycle traffic. These linkages would provide better circulation throughout the neighborhood, as well as better connections between community members.

Critical Resources

Drainage issues throughout the Blue Hills neighborhood are a deterrent to future development and a major concern to residents. Portions of Blue Hills are in 100-year and 500-year floodplains, with Town Fork Creek as the primary source of potential flooding. Blue Hills has a variety of topographic features that include steep slopes, limestone outcroppings, and ravines. The elevated topography in the northeastern section provides scenic views that could be an incentive for future development.

Safe City

The overall crime rate for the neighborhood has been decreasing over the past three years. Most significant decreases are in the instances of homicide, robbery, burglary, and larceny. Residents would like to see increased patrol of the vacant properties and the Blue Hills Park. Increased police patrol, code enforcement, targeted infill and rehabilitated housing could aid in decreasing real and perceived crime.

Business & Development

Four areas within the Blue Hills Neighborhood currently have economic development incentives in place. Those areas are Town Fork Creek Urban Renewal Plan, St. James Urban Renewal Plan, 5300 Block of Highland to Woodland Urban Renewal Plan, Southtown/ 31st and Baltimore Tax Increment Financing Plan. The dominant commercial activity in Blue Hills is along Prospect Avenue and 63rd Street. The neighborhood also has a small neighborhood retail center at 55th Street and Euclid Avenue, which is currently underutilized. Kansas City Neighborhood Alliance has targeted the Blue Hills Neighborhood for a Neighborhood Preservation Initiative. This program rehabilitates properties for the purpose of increasing quality owner occupied housing. St. James Church located at 56th Street and The Paseo Boulevard is currently undergoing an expansion.

Continued target housing and commercial development could aid the community in its efforts to stabilize the neighborhood. Development efforts should be targeted toward addressing the needs of the community.

INTRODUCTION

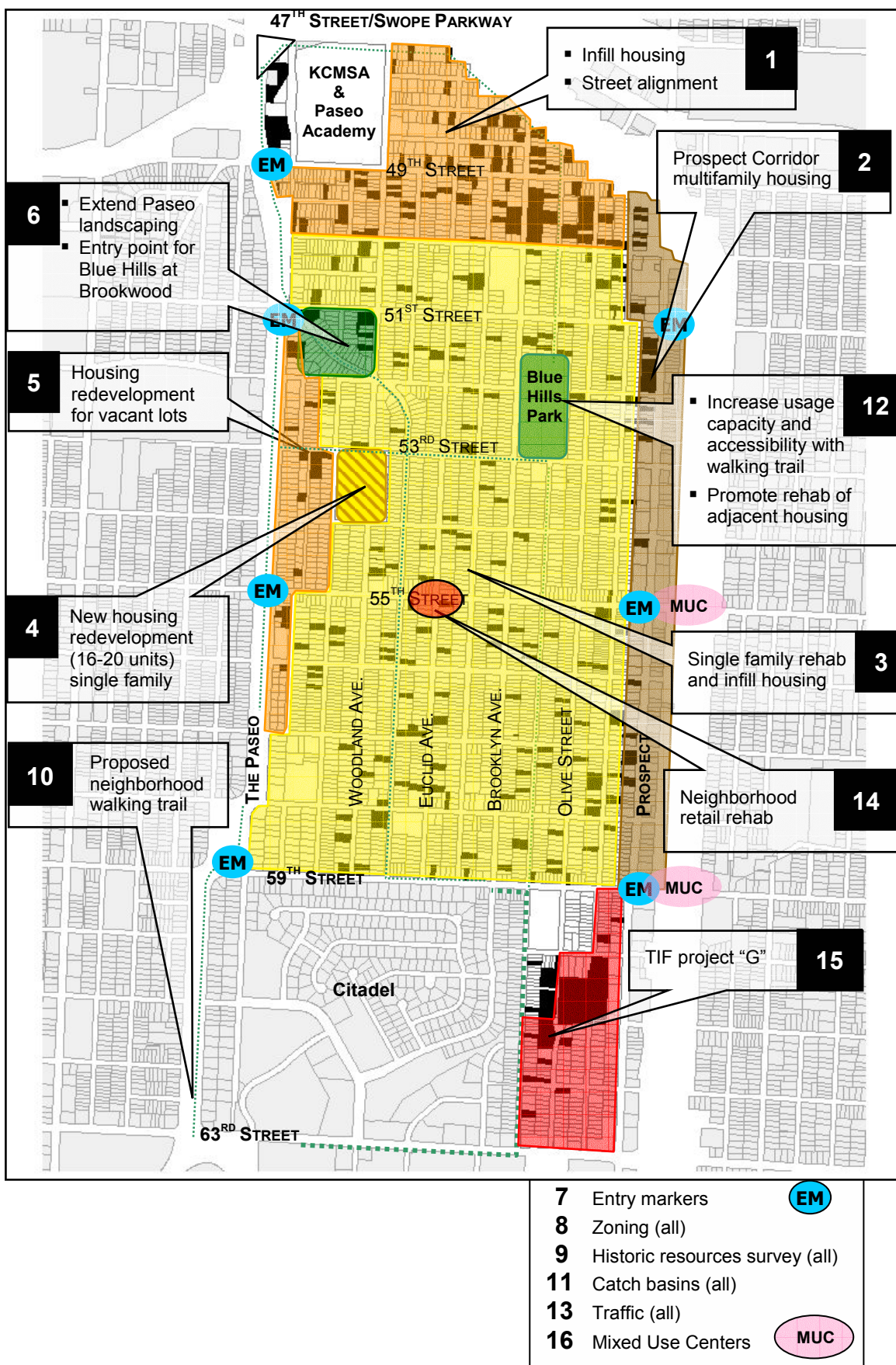
This section identifies options for the Blue Hills neighborhood in the following categories:

- Livable Neighborhoods
- Choice in Transportation
- Critical Resources
- Safe City
- Business and Development

Under each development option category, potential projects are numbered according to the development project map on Page 58, summarized in the matrix below, and detailed with the following information for each project:

- Site Description
- Project Description
- Rationale
- Schedule
- Participants
- Suggested Funding Sources

#	Project Name	Type	Category
1	Northeast Blue Hills	Single-family housing	Livable Neighborhoods
2	Prospect Corridor	Medium-density housing	Livable Neighborhoods
3	Central Blue Hills	Single-family, infill and rehab	Livable Neighborhoods
4	5300 Woodland	Single-family, infill	Livable Neighborhoods
5	The Paseo Boulevard	Single-family, new and rehab	Livable Neighborhoods
6	Brookwood Avenue	New entry	Livable Neighborhoods
7	Entry Markers	Identity, landscaping	Livable Neighborhoods
8	Zoning	Downzoning	Livable Neighborhoods
9	Historic Resources Survey	Inventory	Livable Neighborhoods
10	Pedestrian Trail	Recreation, connection	Choice in Transportation
11	Catch Basins	Infrastructure	Critical Resources
12	Blue Hills Park	Recreational amenities	Safe City
13	Traffic	Traffic control	Safe City
14	55 th & Euclid Retail	Rehab neighborhood retail	Business and Development
15	TIF Project "G"	Commercial, residential	Business and Development
16	Prospect Mixed Use Centers	Commercial	Business and Development



LIVABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

Nine potential projects for Blue Hills foster the aim of Livable Neighborhoods. Each project is listed below and described in greater detail later in the section.

- **Livable Neighborhoods 1: Northeast Blue Hills**
Skyline views and area housing provide opportunity for in-fill housing.
- **Livable Neighborhoods 2: Prospect Corridor**
Medium-density residential in line with FOCUS "Great Streets" recommendation: "new multi-family residential infill will be encouraged along the Great Streets... The infill development will be of a compatible character with the older apartments." (*Urban Core Plan*, p.34)
- **Livable Neighborhoods 3: Central Blue Hills**
Infill and rehabilitated single-family housing.
- **Livable Neighborhoods 4: 5300 Woodland**
Single-family homes on the former Little Sisters of the Poor site, incorporating the remaining historic stable building.
- **Livable Neighborhoods 5: The Paseo Boulevard**
Rehabilitation, limited demolition, and new single-family homes to exemplify "Great Streets" recommendation.
- **Livable Neighborhoods 6: Brookwood Avenue**
An entry point for the neighborhood, to be enhanced with an entry marker and landscaping.
- **Livable Neighborhoods 7: Entry Markers**
To highlight and announce the neighborhood to the city.
- **Livable Neighborhoods 8: Zoning**
Downzoning throughout to return rental potential multi-family housing sites to single-family home uses.
- **Livable Neighborhoods 9: Historic Resources Survey**
Survey the historic built environment of the Blue Hills neighborhood.

CHOICE IN TRANSPORTATION

Towards the goal of a more multi-modal city, the following project proposes a route to move pedestrians around and through Blue Hills, and is detailed further in the project sheets.

- **Choice in Transportation 10: Pedestrian Trail**
A marked path or interpretive trail throughout the neighborhood networking multiple sites, including recreation, worship, transportation, retail and other sites of interest.

CRITICAL RESOURCES

Initiated and conducted by Blue Hills residents, an analysis of each catch basin in the neighborhood was documented as a foundation for this potential project.

- **Critical Resources 11: Catch Basins**
Repair or replacement of catch basins throughout the neighborhood.

SAFE CITY

Addressing neighborliness, disorder, environmental design, and enforcement issues, the two projects below are designed to promote safe city issues. Further detail is available on the respective project sheets.

- **Safe City 12: Blue Hills Park**
Add recreational amenities, incorporate a pedestrian park, and examine condition of adjacent properties.
- **Safe City 13: Traffic**
Address high speeds with traffic control measures throughout the neighborhood.

BUSINESS AND DEVELOPMENT

The two projects listed below will stabilize the neighborhood and increase the economic viability of the properties.

- **Business and Development 14: 55th and Euclid Retail**
Rehabilitation of the structure and parking improvements.
- **Business and Development 16: Prospect Mixed Use Centers**
Mixed-use centers should be designated and supported on Prospect Avenue at 55th Street, 59th Street, and 63rd Street.

PROJECT SHEETS

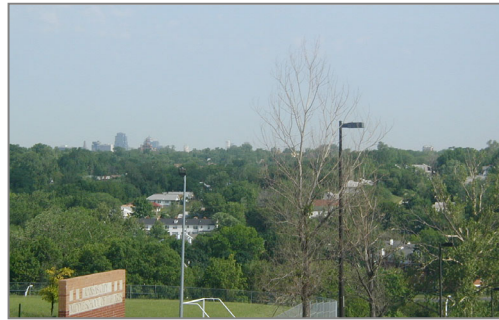
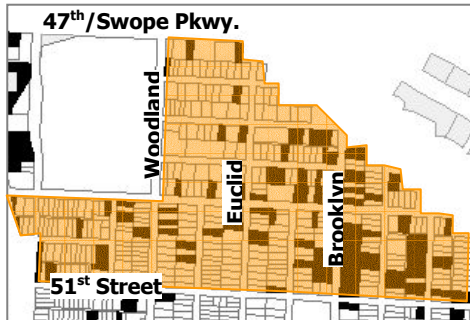
The following pages provide greater detail on the sixteen proposed projects. Information on these sheets includes a site and project description, rationale for the project, schedule, participants, and suggested funding sources for each project. In addition, each page includes a map and photos of that neighborhood area.

SUMMARY

Sixteen potential projects arose from community meetings and on-site analysis of the Blue Hills neighborhood. These projects have been explored in terms of rationale, schedule and funding. Residents and board members of the neighborhood will assist in prioritizing the projects, which will be developed further in Section 4.

1

Livable Neighborhoods **Northeast Blue Hills**



Site Description

From 47th Street/Swope Parkway to 49th Street, The Paseo Boulevard to Wabash Avenue.

Project Description

This section of the Blue Hills Neighborhood offers opportunity for infill and rehabilitated single-family housing. The scenic views and surrounding housing stock would provide the potential for large-scale market-rate housing. Vacant lots combined with the demolition of dilapidated structures would provide for the construction of 30-40 new single-family homes.

Rationale

Rehabilitation of existing structures combined with demolition of deteriorated structures and new construction on vacant lots would aid in the stabilization of the neighborhood. This project would build on Kansas City Neighborhood Alliance's pioneering rehabilitation throughout the Blue Hills Neighborhood.

Schedule

Three to seven years

Participants

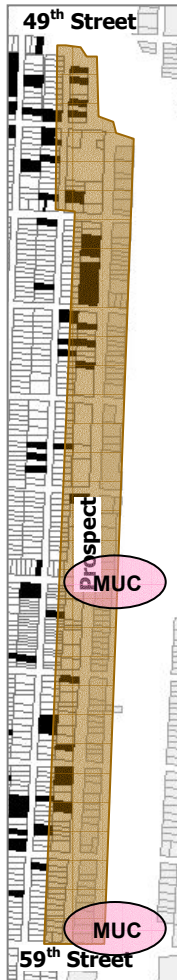
Blue Hills Neighborhood Association, Department of Housing and Community Development, Housing and Economic Development Financial Corporation, Kansas City Neighborhood Alliance, Community Builders of Kansas City

Suggested Funding Sources

TIF Revenue, HOME Funds, CDBG Funds, NPI Funds, Private Financing

2

Livable Neighborhoods Prospect Corridor



Site Description

From 49th and 50th Streets to 59th Street, Wabash Avenue to Prospect.

Project Description

The construction of medium-density housing along Prospect Avenue would provide approximately 250 units of multi-family housing.

Rationale

The FOCUS Kansas City Plan recommends Prospect Avenue as a "Residential Great Street" where "development incentives will be used to encourage residential construction and rehabilitation...multi-family residential buildings will be infilled to rebuild the historic development pattern and create the density of residents necessary to support the Mixed-Use Centers." (*Urban Core Plan*, p. 150) Much of the rental housing in the Blue Hills Neighborhood lies in interior properties better suited for owner occupied single-family housing. Creating quality rental housing on the arterial would provide better housing options within the Blue Hills Neighborhood.

Schedule

Five to ten years

Participants

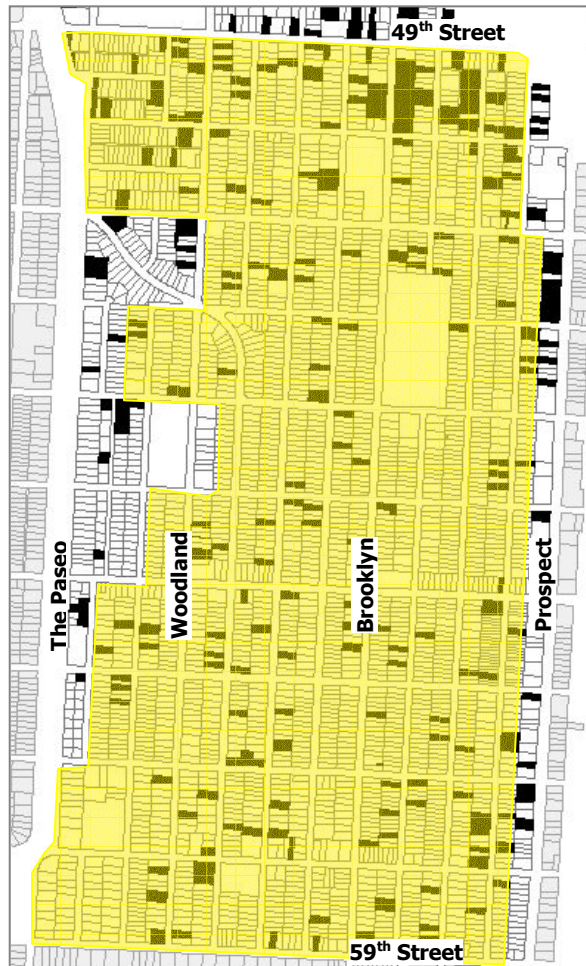
Blue Hills Neighborhood Association, Department of Housing and Community Development, Housing and Economic Development Financial Corporation, Missouri Housing Development Corporation, Kansas City Neighborhood Alliance, Community Builders of Kansas city, Tax Increment Financing Commission

Suggested Funding Sources

TIF Revenue, HOME Funds, CDBG Funds, Tax Credits, Private Financing

3

Livable Neighborhoods Central Blue Hills



Site Description

From 49th Street to 59th Street, The Paseo Boulevard to Wabash Avenue.

Project Description

This section of the Blue Hills Neighborhood offers opportunity for infill and rehabilitated single-family housing. This area offers potential approximately 200 new single-family homes from vacant lots and proposed limited demolition.

Rationale

Rehabilitation of existing structures combined with limited demolition of deteriorated structures, where rehabilitation is not a viable alternative, and new construction on vacant lots will aid in the stabilization of the neighborhood. Many of the new single-family homes would be on lots with less than a 50 ft. frontage. Lots with 35-50 ft. frontages would be consistent with the surrounding neighborhood.

Schedule

Three to seven years

Participants

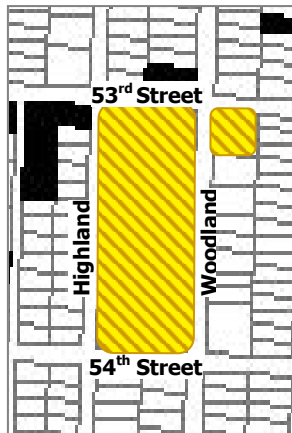
Blue Hills Neighborhood Association, Department of Housing and Community Development, Housing and Economic Development Financial Corporation, Kansas City Neighborhood Alliance, Community Builders of Kansas City

Suggested Funding Sources

HOME Funds, CDBG Funds, NPI Funds, Private Financing

4

Livable Neighborhoods **5300 Woodland**



Site Description

The 5300 block of Highland and Woodland

Project Description

Adaptive reuse options for the historic stable building include daycare center, adult daycare center, or retreat center with incorporated green space. Eighteen to twenty-one units of single-family housing are proposed for the remainder of the block. The new single-family homes would be 1,300 sq. ft., three bedroom, two bathrooms, with an attached garage. The property located at 5301 Woodland, once the residence for the local Order of Little Sisters of the Poor, could be rehabilitated into 4-6 senior housing units.

Rationale

The existing stable building is a historic structure in need of structural repair and reuse. A senior housing facility combined with single-family housing could provide much needed housing units.

Schedule

One to three years

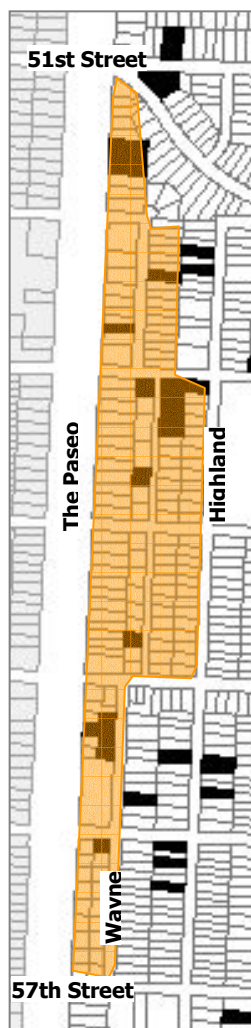
Participants

Blue Hills Neighborhood Association, Department of Housing and Community Development, Housing and Economic Development Financial Corporation, Missouri Housing Development Corporation, Community Builders of Kansas City

Suggested Funding Sources

HOME Funds, CDBG Funds, Tax Credits, Private Financing

5

Livable Neighborhoods
The Paseo Boulevard

Site Description

From 51st Street to 57th Street along The Paseo Boulevard to Wayne/Highland.

Project Description

"The *Urban Core Plan* calls for the revitalization of the boulevards and the designation of a network of Great Streets where the City will focus investment and target incentives to upgrade infrastructure, enhance the streetscape and encourage activity that is attractive to pedestrians." (*Urban Core Plan*, p.19) As part of the revitalization of this Boulevard, the adjacent area from Wayne to Highland should be revitalized with rehabilitation loan programs and new single-family infill housing, in coordination with the limited demolition of deteriorated structures where rehabilitation is not a viable option. Due to the Boulevard nature of The Paseo, large-scale market rate housing would be the most appropriate housing type.

Rationale

This area of The Paseo is targeted for housing revitalization in order to reinforce the Boulevard nature of The Paseo. Where rehabilitation is not a viable option, large-scale market rate in-fill housing would support the Boulevard and Great Street designation for The Paseo. The adjacent blocks from Wayne to Highland should be included in the revitalization as there is irregular platting, including very shallow lots and streets that are not aligned efficiently, which could be addressed as the lots on The Paseo are studied. St. James Church could assist with sponsoring this reinvestment, lobbying for outside support, and utilizing their congregations as both fundraisers and a market for rehabilitated homes.

Schedule

Three to seven years

Participants

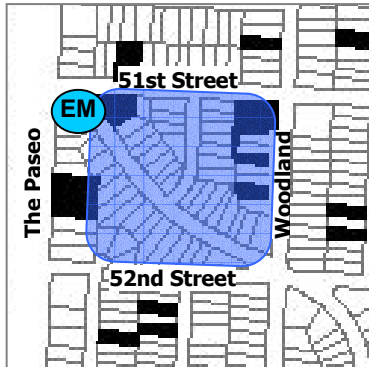
Blue Hills Neighborhood Association, Department of Housing and Community Development, Housing and Economic Development Financial Corporation, Kansas City Neighborhood Alliance, Community Builders of Kansas City

Suggested Funding Sources

HOME Funds, CDBG Funds, NPI Funds, Private Financing

6

Livable Neighborhoods Brookwood Avenue



Site Description

Brookwood Avenue enters into the neighborhood off of 51st Street and The Paseo Boulevard, running diagonally until it meets with Michigan Avenue.

Project Description

This street would be targeted with landscaping features, as well as new trees and a marker at 51st Street.

Rationale

Brookwood Avenue is a scenic entrance to Blue Hills from The Paseo Boulevard; enhancing this entrance increases the marketability of the neighborhood.

Schedule

One to three years

Participants

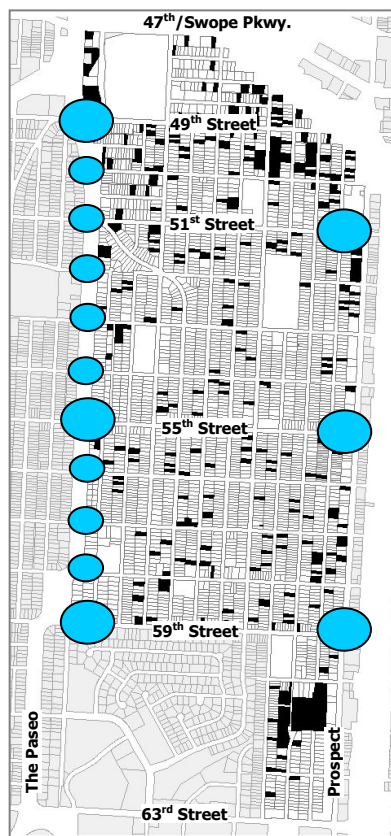
Blue Hills Neighborhood Association, Public Works Department

Suggested Funding Sources

PIAC Funds, General Funds

7

Livable Neighborhoods Entry Markers



Site Description

The following intersections along The Paseo Boulevard:

- **Large-scale gateway:** 49th, 51st, 55th, 59th
- **Entry marker:** 47th Street, 47th Terrace, 50th, 52nd, 53rd, 54th, 56th, 57th, 58th

The following intersections along Prospect Avenue:

- **Entry Marker:** 51st, 55th, 59th

Project Description

At significant intersections along The Paseo Boulevard and Prospect Avenue information markers incorporated within a small landscaped setting provide enhancement features to the boulevard system and the commercial intersections along Prospect Avenue.

Rationale

These small parcels of land could serve a significant gateway role for pedestrians and cars entering and exiting the neighborhood. The Quality Places to Live and Work Building Block of the FOCUS Kansas City Plan calls for the use of "symbolic gateways- entry points that announce that you are entering a special place" to provide neighborhoods with a distinct and identifiable character. The FOCUS Neighborhood Prototypes Plan recommends that neighborhood gateways be located, "at major vehicular and pedestrian entries into a neighborhood", and to, "Locate the neighborhood identification sign at the entry." A study will be conducted to determine the best placement for these entry markers.

Schedule

One to two years

Participants

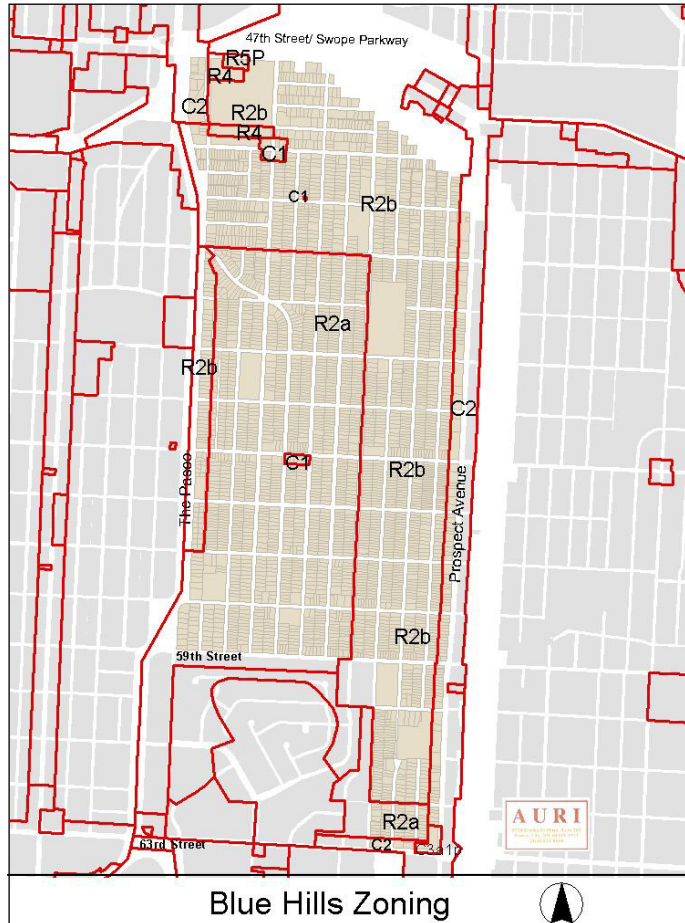
Blue Hills Neighborhood Association, Parks and Recreation Department, TIF Commission

Suggested Funding Sources

TIF Revenue, adjacent institutions (Rockhurst College, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation)

8

Livable Neighborhoods Zoning



Site Description

47th Street/Swope Parkway to 63rd Street, The Paseo Boulevard to Prospect Avenue.

Project Description

Downzoning throughout the Blue Hills Neighborhood.

Rationale

Decreasing zoning density would aid in returning existing duplexes and homes converted to business uses back to single-family uses. As stated in the Urban Core report, the zoning ordinance for areas with apartments on boulevards or arterial streets "unintentionally helped to create a cycle in which property values gradually dropped and many large houses were subdivided into apartments." (Urban Core report, pg.34)

Schedule

One year

Participants

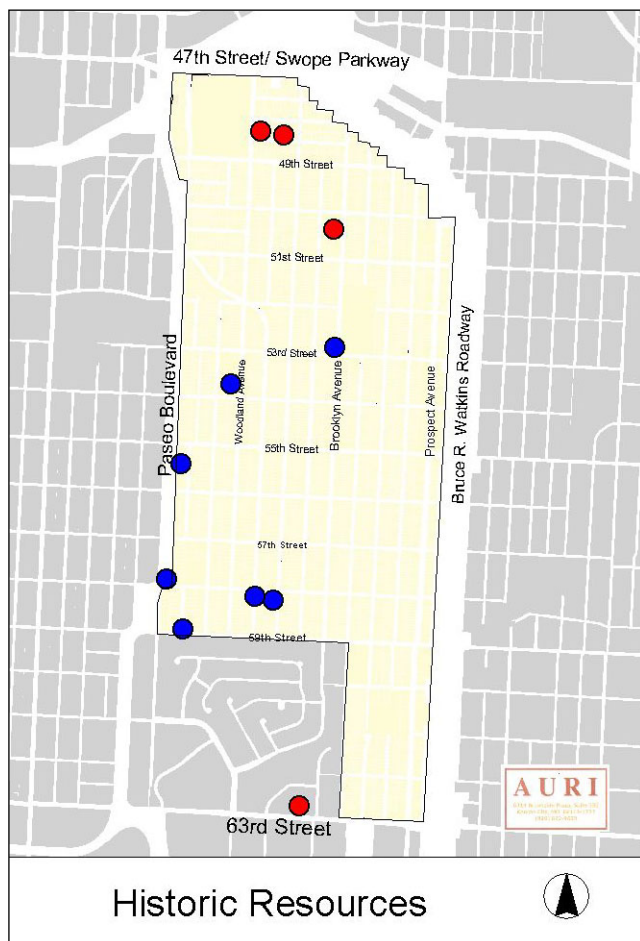
City Planning and Development Department, City Planning Commission, City Council, Blue Hills Neighborhood Association

Suggested Funding Sources

N/A

9

Livable Neighborhoods Historic Resources Survey



Site Description

47th Street/Swope Parkway to 63rd Street,
The Paseo Boulevard to Prospect Avenue.

Project Description

Survey of the historic built environment, with the possibility of smaller Historic District designations within the Blue Hills neighborhood.

Rationale

FOCUS Kansas City, Plan For Meaningful Communities recommends the ongoing identification and evaluation of historic resources. It is the number one aspiration/goal to "Accelerate the identification and evaluation of historic resources to facilitate planning and compliance with Federal, State, and Local regulatory processes." (Preservation Plan, pg. 80) The Blue Hills Neighborhood has many structures of historic integrity that should be identified and recorded as such.

Schedule

One to three years

Participants

Blue Hills Neighborhood Association, City Planning and Development Department, Department of Natural Resources

Suggested Funding Sources

Department of Natural Resources

10

Choice in Transportation Pedestrian Trail



Site Description

From 47th Street to 63rd Street, along Woodland Avenue, Brooklyn Avenue and The Paseo Boulevard.

Project Description

Planters, pavers, benches, recreational equipment, lighting and other features targeted toward pedestrians. A study is recommended to determine the best uses and possibilities for a trail. The trail would provide links between the following neighborhood features that include:

- Existing park space
- Churches
- Public transportation
- Historic properties
- Boulevard system
- Public schools
- Commercial destinations

Rationale

This pedestrian trail concept has the potential to link residents as well as increasing awareness of the surrounding community. The neighborhood is well served by sidewalks that could be incorporated into a pedestrian through street lighting, benches, markers and smaller recreational equipment.

Schedule

Three to five years

Participants

Blue Hills Neighborhood Association, Adjacent developers, Parks and Recreation Department, Public Works Department, City Planning and Development Department, Missouri Department of Transportation, Mid-America Regional Council

Suggested Funding Sources

TIF Revenue, adjacent institutions (Rockhurst College, Ewing and Marion Kauffman Foundation), MDOT, PIAC Funds, General Funds

11

Critical Resources Catch Basins



Site Description

From 47th Street/Swope Parkway to 63rd Street, The Paseo Boulevard to Prospect Avenue.

Project Description

Repair or replacement of catch basins throughout the neighborhood.

Rationale

Most of the catch basins in the area are in need of significant repair or replacement. These problems are causing significant drainage issues throughout Blue Hills.

Schedule

One to two years

Participants

Public Works Department

Suggested Funding Sources

PIAC Funds

12

Safe City **Blue Hills Park**



Site Description

From the southern half of the 5100 block of Park Avenue to 53rd Street, Brooklyn Avenue to one half block east of Park Avenue.

Project Description

This option targets Blue Hills Park with park and recreational amenities and incorporates a pedestrian trail. To increase the use and safety of the park the surrounding properties should be targeted with rehabilitation, limited demolition of dilapidated structures when rehabilitation is not a viable option, and new single-family infill housing.

Rationale

Residents raised issues concerning the existing use and condition of the park. Targeting Blue Hills Park would increase the linkages between residents and increase safety in the neighborhood.

Schedule

Three to seven years

Participants

Blue Hills Neighborhood Association, City Planning and Development, Department of Housing and Community Development, Kansas City Neighborhood Alliance, Housing and Economic Development Financial Corporation, Public Works Department, Tax Increment Financing commission, Missouri Department of Transportation

Suggested Funding Sources

TIF Revenue, HOME Funds, CDBG Funds, NPI Funds, Private Financing, PIAC Funds, General Funds, Foundation Support, MDOT Funds

13

Safe City Traffic



Site Description

From 47th Street/Swope Parkway to 63rd Street, The Paseo Boulevard to Prospect Avenue.

Project Description

Traffic calming measures throughout the neighborhood.

Rationale

Speeding and other traffic violations are dominant throughout the area, making residents hesitant to walk in the neighborhood. Residents have observed that automobile drivers tend to use the neighborhood streets as thoroughfares instead of arterial streets.

Schedule

One to three years

Participants

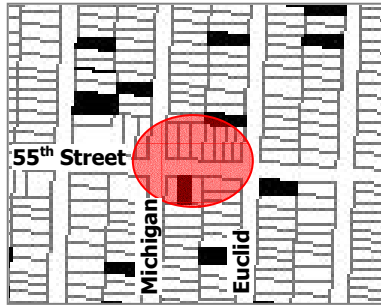
Public Works Department, City Planning and Development Department

Suggested Funding Sources

PIAC Funds, TIF Funds

14

Business and Development **55th & Euclid Retail**



Site Description

On 55th Street, facing blocks on the north and south, from Michigan Avenue to Euclid Avenue.

Project Description

This property could be targeted with façade improvements, as well as improvements to the surrounding environment.

Rationale

Rehabilitation of the existing structure combined with parking improvements, aid in the stabilization of the neighborhood, as well as add to the economic viability of the site.

Schedule

Dependent on owner

Participants

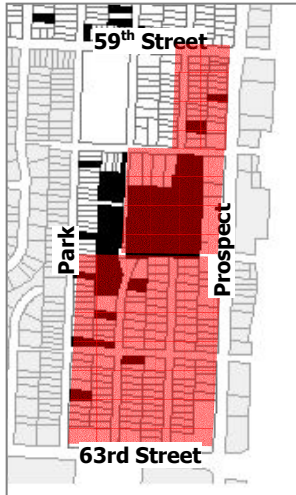
Planned Industrial Expansion Authority, Tax Increment Financing Commission, Missouri Department of Economic Development, Housing and Economic Development Financial Corporation

Suggested Funding Sources

Tax Credits, Tax Abatement, Tax Increment Financing, CDBG Funds

15

Business and Development **TIF Project "G"**



Site Description

From 59th Street to 63rd Street, Park Avenue to Prospect Avenue.

Project Description

Revitalization of the residential and commercial neighborhood surrounding the Research and Baptist Medical Centers. This plan could assist with redevelopment efforts by providing tax revenues for new construction, redevelopment projects that could improve and stabilize the surrounding neighborhood.

Rationale

Providing for the stabilization of this residential and commercial neighborhood. The TIF revenue will be used to retain and attract new businesses to the area. This funding tool combined with local, state and federal financing tools could ultimately contribute to the construction or infill and rehabilitated housing.

Schedule

Dependent on TIF

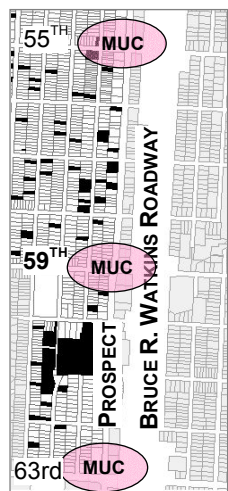
Participants

Tax Increment Financing Commission, Health MidWest, Partnership for Change, Community Development Corporation of Kansas City

Suggested Funding Sources

Tax Increment Financing

16

Business and Development
Prospect Mixed Use Centers
**Site Description**

On Prospect Avenue at the intersection of 55th Street and from 59th Street to the 63rd Street Corridor.

Project Description

Small-scale mixed use development.

Rationale

FOCUS Kansas City, Urban Core Plan recommends the sites for mixed-use centers. "In our recent history, commercial development outside of the Central Business Corridor has been encouraged along a series of development "corridors" or "spines." Supported by the *Major Street Plan* and a pattern of typically one-half block deep commercial zoning, strip

development has occurred along many of the major thoroughfares of the urban core. These include Troost, Prospect, Independence and other avenues and boulevards. Although this pattern was initiated along Troost and Prospect during the streetcar era, most of the major streets were characterized in their original formation by regularly occurring "nodes" of commercial development at major intersections. These nodes included a variety of businesses from shops and restaurants to offices and professional services; in between these clusters of commercial development, the avenues and boulevards were typically inhabited by some of the city's largest homes as well as the two to four story apartment buildings historically typical in Kansas City." (*Urban Core Plan*, p.43) FOCUS has defined three types of mixed-use centers: Small Neighborhood, Neighborhood Centers, and Community Centers. Small Neighborhood Centers, planned for Prospect Avenue at 55th and 59th Street, are described as "the smallest of the nodal types and most reflective of the historic patterns...Their potential services are wide ranging but tend to be small scale operations." (*Urban Core Plan*, p.48) The development area is a quarter block, in a cruciform shape, with parking on-street or behind. A Neighborhood Center is planned for the 63rd Street/ Meyer Boulevard Corridor. The development area ranges from 4 half blocks to full blocks and serves "several nearby neighborhoods and offer(s) greater vehicular and transit access." (*Urban Core Plan*, p. 48) Economic development on the periphery of the Blue Hills neighborhood would help stabilize the community while increasing employment and retail opportunities.

Schedule

Five to ten years

Participants

Partnership for Change, Community Development Corporation of Kansas City, City Planning and Development, Tax Increment Financing Corporation, Planned Industrial Expansion Authority, Department of Housing and Community Development, Housing and Economic Development Financial Corporation

Suggested Funding Sources

Tax Increment Financing, Tax Abatement, Economic Development Tax Credits

INTRODUCTION

The plan recommendations reflect the nature of and are a direct result of ongoing community participation, City involvement, and planning analysis. The purpose of these recommendations is to provide a framework guiding public and private decision-making processes in the Blue Hills neighborhood. This framework will help ensure that future development in Blue Hills is of the character and quality appropriate for the immediate and surrounding communities.

The plan's recommendations include policy recommendations, design guidelines, and prototype development projects. Policy recommendations are provided in the following categories:

- Livable Neighborhoods
- Choice in Transportation
- Critical Resources
- Safe City
- Business and Development

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to provide guidance for future redevelopment and to support a revitalized urban core with a cohesive development framework, this plan recommends that the City adopt the following policies and design guidelines for the Blue Hills neighborhood. The public policy recommendations are:

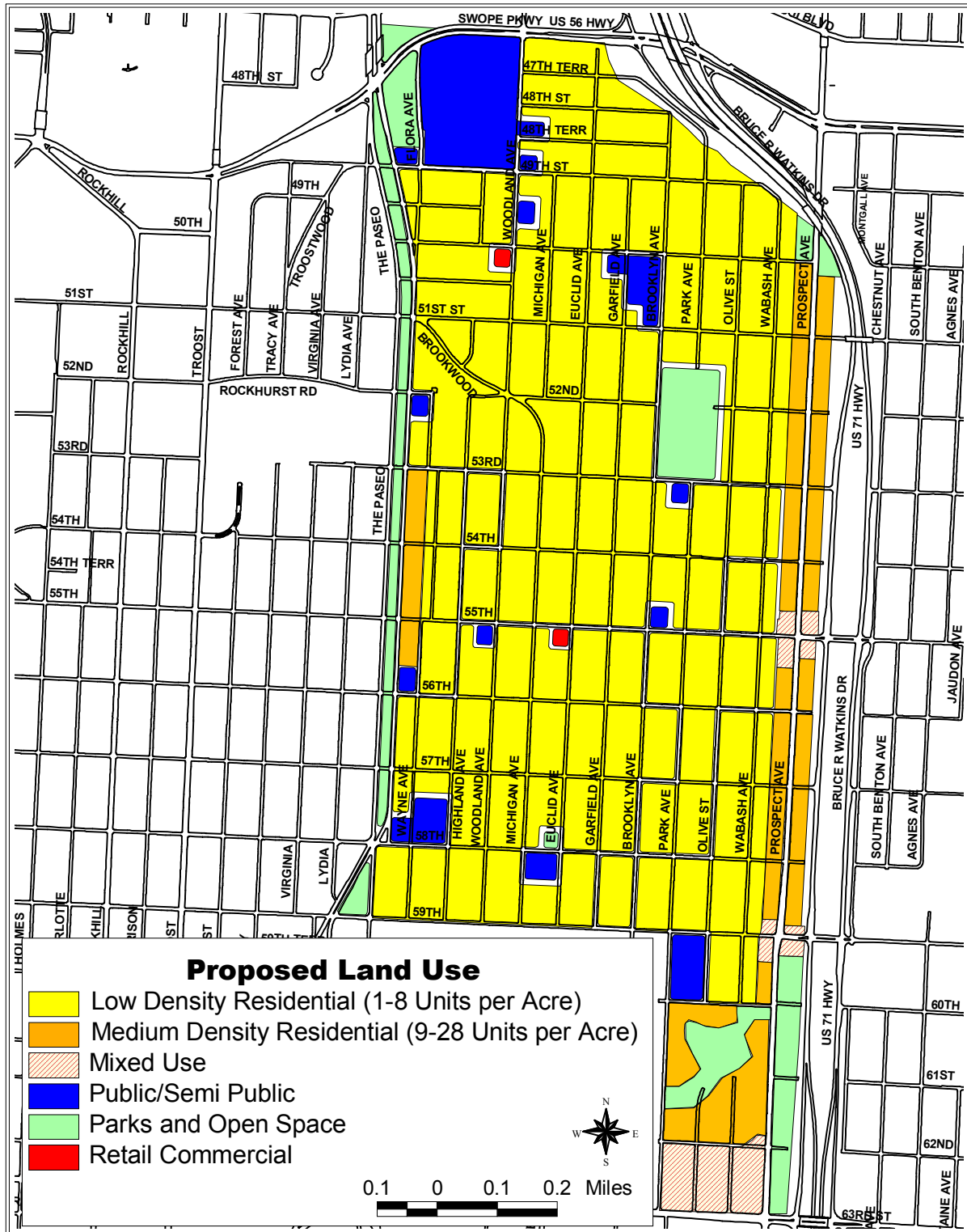
Livable Neighborhoods	
1.	Land use and zoning designations should be consistent with the residential character of Blue Hills.
2.	Zoning patterns should reflect appropriate land use designations. Downzone R-2 to R1 and focus neighborhood retail at nodes with mixed-use zoning.
3.	Retain the single-family nature of the Blue Hills neighborhood through continued development of quality housing. Target city housing funds through the Consolidated Plan.
4.	Support the preservation of historic properties and encourage development and renovation that is respectful of historic character. Explore a Historic District Designation.
5.	Create enhanced entrances into the Blue Hill neighborhood. Specifically, apply for PIAC and Public funds.
Choice in Transportation	
6.	Increase the connectivity within the community through pedestrian/bicycle routes throughout Blue Hills.
Critical Resources	
7.	Establish a program for the efficient repair and maintenance of catch basins.
Safe City	
8.	Reinforce and stabilize Blue Hills Park.
9.	Reinforce the secondary arterials and neighborhood streets as pedestrian friendly streets through traffic calming measures.
Business and Development	
10.	Support commercial development that is responsive to the needs and the character of the community.

Livable Neighborhoods

1. Land use and zoning designations should be consistent with the residential character of Blue Hills.

Rationale: Concentrating low density residential in the interior, with commercial and medium density residential uses on the arterials will prohibit the development of higher and denser uses in the interior of Blue Hills. This will help sustain a vital residential neighborhood in Kansas City's urban core.

- *Supportive Action:* Traditional strip commercial development shall be discouraged and replaced by a mixed use pattern of development in designated areas within the neighborhood. Nodal mixed use development shall occur at major intersections along Prospect Avenue.
- *Supportive Action:* The South Central Area Plan should be amended to reflect the Proposed Land Use, illustrated below (see Appendix for land use definitions):
 - Prospect Avenue should have mixed-use designations from 54th Street to 56th Street and 58th Street to 60th Street to reflect future status as a mixed-use center. (FOCUS Urban Core Plan, p.67)
 - Buildings at mixed-use nodes shall be catalyst for developing the sense of place. These structures should be unique structures of quality development construction that are consistent with the historic development patterns of the area.
 - The interior should be predominantly low density residential.
 - The corner of Paseo Boulevard and 47th Street should have an open space designation, as the topography is steep and therefore awkward for residential development. In addition, the current location of the school would hinder access to that type of development.
 - Commercial encroachment into the interior residential portion of the neighborhood shall be discouraged.
 - Traditional strip commercial development shall be discouraged and replaced by a mixed use pattern of development in designated areas within the neighborhood. Nodal mixed-use development shall occur at major intersections along Prospect Avenue.
 - Mixed-use development at the nodes shall be designed to support pedestrian oriented activities. These areas shall be planned to encourage a diversity of activity, safety for pedestrians and smaller scale elements and storefronts at the street level to encourage diversity of activity.



Proposed Land Use Definitions:

Low Density Residential: Generally one to three story single-family and duplex housing, with a density range of 1-8 dwelling units per acre.

Medium Density Residential: Generally includes apartment buildings up to six stories in height, with a density range of 9-28 dwelling units per acre.

Mixed Use: A node of development and activity that provides a focal point for the surrounding area. This node incorporates mixed uses such as commercial, office, residential, and community serving facilities. The transportation/circulation system in a mixed use center is designed to accommodate a variety of modes, including pedestrian, transit, bicycle and the automobile. Mixed use centers are divided according to function and scale into regional, community and neighborhood centers.

- ✧ *Mixed Use Center- Neighborhood:* A type of mixed use center designed to serve adjacent neighborhoods which provides services such as a grocery store, pharmacies, small to medium size office spaces, banks, low to medium density housing and other low-rise office buildings. Pertaining Blue Hills, this type of mixed use is targeted for the 63rd Street/Meyer Corridor.
- ✧ *Mixed Use Center- Small Neighborhood:* A type of mixed use center designed to serve a neighborhood and which provides small scale services, such as an ice cream parlor, coffee shop, small sit-down restaurant, a hair salon and other small businesses. These centers are located close to low density housing areas. Within Blue Hills this type of mixed use is targeted for the intersections of 55th and 59th Streets at Prospect Avenue.

Public/Semi-Public: This category includes schools, churches, hospitals, libraries, museums, auditoriums, mental health centers, and governmental buildings.

Recreational and Open Space: This category includes public and private parks, as well as public and private land which is in some way either temporarily or permanently reserved from development.

Retail Commercial: This category includes community and regional scale sales and services.

2. Zoning patterns should reflect the appropriate land use designations.

Rationale: Downzoning is appropriate when the existing zoning of an area is not consistent with the adopted land use policies. Land use in the Blue Hills neighborhood is predominately residential in the interior of the neighborhood with commercial uses along Prospect Avenue on the east and Swope Parkway on the north. Generally, the area north of 59th Street to Swope Parkway, from the Paseo Boulevard to Prospect Avenue, has an R2a and R2b zoning designation. Due to the increased reinvestment in the area, specifically in single-family residential rehabilitation, this area should be considered for downzoning to an R1 category. The illustration to the right details existing zoning:



- *Supportive Action:* The Blue Hills Neighborhood Association works in coordination with the residents and City staff to select areas that will be downzoned.
- *Supportive Action:* With the sponsorship of one or more City Council members, City Planning staff prepares an application for rezoning.

3. Retain the single-family nature of the Blue Hills neighborhood through continued development of quality housing.

Rationale: Blue Hills offers opportunities to create housing options for a diverse range of income levels, ages, and household sizes. Maximizing these opportunities would aid in the stabilization of the neighborhood.

- *Supportive Action:* Reinforce and stabilize existing housing through targeted rehabilitation efforts.
- *Supportive Action:* Promote targeted infill single-family housing to increase housing opportunities for a variety of needs through the Consolidated Plan.
- *Supportive Action:* Enhance the boulevard quality of The Paseo Boulevard through infill and rehabilitated housing.
- *Supportive Action:* Enhance the potential 'Residential Great Street' aspects of Prospect Avenue by developing multi-family housing that reflects architectural characteristics of single-family housing.
- *Supportive Action:* The neighborhood association and the City shall work to implement the Urban Design Guidelines of this plan for all new and infill development.

4. Support the preservation of historic properties and encourage development and renovation that is respectful of historic character.

Rationale: FOCUS Kansas City, *Plan For Meaningful Communities* recommends the ongoing identification and evaluation of historic resources. The Blue Hills neighborhood has many structures of historic integrity that should be identified as such. The following actions are aligned with the Aspiration/Goals of the *Plan for Meaningful Communities*.

Aspiration/Goal #1: Accelerate the Identification and evaluation of historic resources to facilitate planning and compliance with Federal, State and local regulatory processes.

- *Supportive Action:* Apply for Historic Preservation Grant-in-Aid funds to complete a survey of the built environment.
- *Supportive Action:* Create a Volunteer Survey Program to assist the Landmarks Commission with the survey of the built environment in accordance with the National Park Service Criteria for Evaluating Significance and rank according the *Criteria For Determining Levels of Significance*.
- *Supportive Action:* Survey of the Historic Built Environment to provide base information on the historic resources in the Blue Hills neighborhood.
- *Supportive Action:* Volunteer Survey Team works in a coordinated effort with Kansas City Parks and Recreation and the Historic Preservation Management Division Department of Planning and Development in ongoing systematic identification and evaluation of historic landscapes and sites in the park and boulevard system.
- *Supportive Action:* Develop a process by which to disseminate survey information as well as the benefits of designating a Historic District in the Blue Hills neighborhood.
- *Supportive Action:* Expand existing public/private partnerships to accelerate historic resource identification and evaluation.

Aspiration/Goal #2: Improve the economic viability and better utilize the benefits of preserving of historic resources.

- *Supportive Action:* Work with local and state development entities to create a Preservation Tool Kit that combines a variety of development tools in order reinforce the rehabilitation of existing structures.
- *Supportive Action:* Give priority to significant historic resources that are economically viable and those that will have an impact on surrounding properties.
- *Supportive Action:* Federal and State Tax Credits shall be used to the maximum extent possible to preserve the historic structures within the neighborhood. The public and private sectors will work to educate residents about the use of federal and state historic tax credits.

- *Supportive Action:* Development incentives shall be targeted to those developments that maintain or add to the historic development fabric of the Blue Hills neighborhood.

5. Create enhanced entrances into the Blue Hill neighborhood.

Rationale: Enhanced entrances into the Blue Hills neighborhood help instill a sense of pride and identity for the community. Enhanced entrances on The Paseo Boulevard will accent its boulevard characteristics.

- *Supportive Action:* Place entry markers at intersections along The Paseo Boulevard and selected points along Prospect Avenue, through PIAC and Parks Department funding requests.
- *Supportive Action:* Brookwood Avenue should be targeted with streetscape improvements through PIAC funding requests.
- *Supportive Action:* Key entry points into the neighborhood, where major cross streets intersect proposed mixed use nodes on Prospect Avenue, shall be highlighted with special identity elements such as street banners, neighborhood markers or public art pieces.
- *Supportive Action:* Gateway elements shall be strategically located and designed through a partnership of the public and private sectors to create a sense of arrival to the Blue Hills neighborhood.

Choice in Transportation

6. Increase the connectivity within the community through pedestrian/bicycle routes throughout Blue Hills.

Rationale: A marked path or interpretive trail for pedestrian/bicycle use should link historic sites, recreational, and commercial activity with the larger community.

- *Supportive Action:* Design paths for bicyclists and pedestrians that connect residents with historic sites, commercial and recreational activity, churches and parks, in coordination with “Bike KC!” *Kansas City’s Bicycle Transportation Initiative*, which goes through the Blue Hills neighborhood at Brush Creek Park and The Paseo Boulevard.

Critical Resources

7. Establish a program for the efficient repair and maintenance of catch basins.

Rationale: Effective drainage systems are essential to the health and welfare of a community.

- *Supportive Action:* The Public Works Departments in cooperation with residents of the Blue Hills neighborhood should develop a prioritized and systematic method for the repair and maintenance of catch basins.

Safe City

8. Reinforce and stabilize Blue Hills Park.

Rationale: Park space is an integral part of a thriving, healthy community. Reinforcing and stabilizing the Blue Hills Park would decrease both perceived and real crime, as well provide opportunities to reconnect residents to each other.

- *Supportive Action:* Increase park and recreational amenities in Blue Hills Park.
- *Supportive Action:* Coordinate police, school, church and neighborhood functions in Blue Hills Park.
- *Supportive Action:* Target surrounding properties with infill and rehabilitation efforts.

9. Reinforce the neighborhood streets as pedestrian friendly streets through traffic calming measures.

Rationale: Surrounding development and the ongoing construction of Bruce R. Watkins Roadway have caused negative traffic issues, disrupted crucial connections, and caused safety issues.

- *Supportive Action:* Request that Public Works conduct a transportation study of traffic impact areas, including pedestrian level of service.
- *Supportive Action:* Utilize proper traffic control measures in the impacted areas. Through-traffic should be encouraged to use arterial streets, and discouraged from collector and neighborhood streets.
- *Supportive Action:* Install appropriate signage that would discourage large trucks from using Blue Hills as a pass-through to their destination.
- *Supportive Action:* Developers will be required to apply pedestrian level of service analysis to all new development proposals.
- *Supportive Action:* Application of traffic calming techniques that are designed to significantly alter the directness or speed with which motorists use the roadway facilities will be primarily on residential and collector streets.

Business and Development

10. Support commercial development that is responsive to the needs and the character of the community.

Rationale: Appropriate commercial activity would help stabilize the community, as well as provide retail and employment opportunity for Blue Hills residents.

- *Supportive Action:* Create Mixed-Use Centers at the intersections of 55th Street and Prospect Avenue, 59th Street and 63rd Street.
- *Supportive Action:* Target the commercial site at 55th Street and Euclid Avenue with rehabilitation incentives.

- *Supportive Action:* Wherever possible, incentives shall be used to encourage quality development over quantity of development in the Blue Hills neighborhood.
- *Supportive Action:* When considering whether to grant tax incentives to a development project, the City shall give priority to projects that are located on designated Great Streets, Transit Impact Zones and Mixed Use Centers. Projects within the neighborhood shall meet these requirements to be granted tax incentives.
- *Supportive Action:* Neighborhood Associations shall partner with neighborhood businesses to work together more effectively on common concerns such as capital improvements, land use policy, traffic regulations, parking, crime and economic development Projects.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Urban design guidelines provide a review basis for the general application to neighborhood projects. The following guidelines for renovation and new construction should be used in conjunction with, not in lieu of, applicable codes and ordinances. All work done in the planning area, including renovation, new construction and change of use, must conform to all applicable codes and ordinances of Kansas City, Missouri. Urban Design Guidelines for the Blue Hills neighborhood shall be adopted and used in all development/redevelopment cases in the neighborhood by all applicable development review bodies.

Applicable Studies

In order to encourage quality planning and design, the City of Kansas City, Missouri has prepared several documents to guide development. The applicable recommendations contained within these documents should be considered during design and development in the Blue Hills neighborhood.

- *A City Plan for Urban Design* (1992) approved by the City Plan Commission on March 15, 1991, provides a guide for City staff in making decisions that support excellent urban design and quality development.
- *FOCUS Kansas City, Urban Core Plan* (July 1997) outlines urban design principles relating to streetscape, buildings, landscape, open space, parking and signage.
- *FOCUS Kansas City, Physical Framework Plan* addresses streetscape/landscape and building design; applicable sections are included within this document.
- *FOCUS Kansas City, Overview* (October 1997) sets forth urban design criteria in the Quality Places to Live and Work Building Block.

Existing Conditions

The existing neighborhood is predominantly single-family residential in use. A few multi-family structures exist in the subject area. The predominant materials are lap siding, brick and stone. Architecturally, the buildings vary widely, with the following general characteristics:

Age	50 years to 100 years
Dominant Style	Bungalow
Height	1 to 2 stories
Setback	20 ft.
Condition	Standard to dilapidated

Streetscape

Within the Blue Hills neighborhood, a streetscape consistency should be created by following the design guidelines set forth by previously stated planning activities, to provide an attractive, functional and pedestrian-friendly environment. A streetscape should be created both within the public right-of-way and within setback or plaza/courtyard areas. All streetscape construction within the right-of-way shall meet the City of Kansas City, Missouri Public Works Department Standards except for specifically approved alternatives or enhancements such as curbing, paving, vehicle barriers, lighting, signage, and furnishings.

Specific Streetscape Guidelines

Streetscape elements shape the experience of the street for the automobile driver as well as the pedestrian, including elements of safety and aesthetics.

- Design of mechanical exhaust systems should not detract from the quality of the pedestrian environment, and shall be placed at least ten feet above sidewalk level with louvers directed upward.
- Enhanced lighting systems providing both pedestrian safety and architectural beauty should be utilized.
- Streetscape improvements should include street lighting, street trees, sidewalk pavement and curbs, and should match improvements made in adjoining areas.

Specific Landscape Guidelines

Landscape features include both existing and new plant material and landforms in the study area. Urban design guidelines affecting landscape design are:

- Existing plant material is to be preserved to the extent possible.
- New plantings are to be placed in areas that reinforce the natural site features of the area and to integrate new plantings with existing.
- Plantings at pedestrian areas are to provide high visibility and strongly identifiable character through the use of colorful, ornamental plant material, as well as shade and protection through the use of larger trees.
- Seasonal color plant material is to be used at pedestrian accent areas.
- Trees with the following characteristics should be specified:
 - High, open branching patterns
 - Tolerant of urban conditions
 - Fruitless
 - Minimum litter

- Minimum caliper of 2.5 inches

Specific Pedestrian Linkage Guidelines

Pedestrian linkages are to facilitate connections with area-wide and citywide amenities as well as safe and convenient pedestrian movement within the project that provides well-identified public access to all points of the project. Urban design guidelines affecting pedestrian trail linkages are:

- All street crossings at mixed-use development intersections should be targeted for improvements that are intended to increase pedestrian safety.
- Improvements made to enhance vehicular traffic movement shall not degrade pedestrian traffic as measured by the level of service standards.
- Parking areas shall be designed to enhance the safety and security of pedestrians and bicyclists.
- All pedestrian paths are to be designed according to ADA design principles.
- Connection to the Bruce R. Watkins Roadway should provide safe and easy access to neighboring communities.
- Public sidewalks are to be provided on both sides of all streets and are to link pedestrians to the neighborhood commercial/retail center, open spaces, residential areas, and neighboring communities.
- Pedestrian linkages are to be well lighted for safety and security.
- In higher density areas, ground level passageways through or between buildings or blocks that increase the ease of pedestrian circulation and the variety of pedestrian experiences should be provided.
- Provision of transit shelters, benches and bicycle parking racks should be placed at mixed-use centers and high volume transit stops.

Buildings

Building design should provide creative architectural solutions to functional use problems. The exterior qualities of a building contribute to the character of a development area. Building placement builds a relationship amongst buildings of different uses and shapes interaction between buildings.

Building Placement

- Buildings are to be placed on the site to recognize a direct relationship to pedestrian circulation and the street. Direct access into the building from a public sidewalk is to be provided.
- New buildings should be set back consistent with existing structures in the area.
- In commercial or mixed-use areas, with the exception of recessed plazas, courtyard space, service areas, and pedestrian entrances, the street wall or block should be reinforced with buildings built with minimal setback from the property lines and with only connecting/ pedestrian corridors between them.

Building Form and Design

- New buildings are to be designed to use building massing (the sculptural assembly of architectural building components) as a means to reinforce key use and symbolic features. Specifically, points of entry should be emphasized with massing, providing a larger mass building block at the corners of future development.
- Bronze window glass, as well as all highly reflective glass, is prohibited.
- Warm earth tones are to be used for building color. Accent colors may be used to identify special locations.
- Rooflines are to be consistently established for adjacent buildings.
- Cornices, parapets, or articulated rooflines are to be designed as major decorative features.
- Buildings along primary and secondary arterials are to provide habitable space at the street level.
- A common architectural vocabulary is to be respected for all buildings within the neighborhood. No single style is required, but styles must be of compatible design, with common materials and building design elements.
- Buildings on edges shall be developed to create and enhance the safe environment within the neighborhood. Structures shall be designed with the intent to reduce criminal behavior and at the same time encourage people to "keep and eye out" for each other.

New Commercial Development

- New commercial development projects shall include a transition element, which is consistent with the area's traditional development patterns to enhance the edge between commercial and residential uses. The elements will include landscaping, traffic calming measures, neighborhood markers and four-sided construction.
- New or redeveloped commercial development projects within the neighborhood shall not be allowed points of ingress or egress for motorized vehicles onto adjacent residential streets. This shall not apply to pedestrian access points.
- In situations when a block commercial and residential uses are "back to back" to one another, parking for the commercial use shall be located at the back or sides of businesses. There shall be screening between these uses to mitigate noise and light pollution occurring as a result of the commercial activity.
- When a commercially zoned project is located adjacent to residential areas, then new construction shall respect the existing building scale of the residential neighborhood.

New Single-Family Infill Construction

- The bulk and form of new construction should be designed to be compatible in scale and design with adjacent buildings or to provide appropriate transitions in scale to the adjacent residences. New residential construction should relate to the placement of existing buildings by observing front, back and side yard setbacks.
- For new construction, the building footprint, determined by setbacks, and parking area should not exceed 70% of the building site.

- New buildings should be oriented with the entrance facade toward the street; building entries for the pedestrian should be located with direct access to the public sidewalk and street.
- The use of residential building materials common to the Blue Hills area is also recommended. These include materials such as stucco, stone, brick, clapboard or lap siding and double hung windows with panes. The use of materials that are not complementary to the Blue Hills neighborhood or other non-urban materials is discouraged. These non-urban materials include but are not limited to the following: imitation masonry materials, mansard shingled roofs, metal panels, concrete panels, plywood siding or cedar siding.
- Proportioning of doors and windows on the primary facade should be in harmony with those of the existing building.
- Garage entrances should not be prominent elements of the primary facade, but should be located at the side or back of a lot, if possible, or recessed at least 4 feet from the front facade.

Rehabilitation

The following guidelines are provided for renovations of and/additions to existing properties:

- Every reasonable effort shall be made to minimize the alteration of street frontage(s) of a housing unit.
- The distinguishing original qualities of character of a building should be retained to the extent possible.
- Alterations that severely contrast in design with a building or with surrounding buildings should be discouraged.
- Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship that characterize a building, structure or site should be retained.
- Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced.
- The surface cleaning of structures should be undertaken with the gentlest means possible.
- Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties should not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant architectural material, and such is compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property or neighborhood.
- Whenever possible, new additions or alterations to structures should be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would not be impaired.
- The Blue Hills neighborhood contains a diversity of building types, but even these diverse styles have common features, including consistent design of building bases, cornices, entrances and windows. Renovation should be done in a manner that preserves these consistent design elements, according to the following guidelines:
 - Preserve existing building detail of base, cornice, entry and windows whenever possible.

- Replace missing detail features on existing buildings whenever possible.
- When general renovation is being done, remove highly visible building additions that are not compatible with the character of the original building or modify them to upgrade their quality and detailing to a level more compatible with the character of the original building.
- Incorporate a level of detail at the base, cornice, entrance and window of additions to existing buildings, where additions are exposed to the public right-of-way, sympathetic with that of the original building.
- Choose materials, colors, and textures for additions to existing buildings that harmonize with those in the original building.
- Locate new mechanical equipment so that it is inconspicuous from the right-of-way.
- Restrict residential signage (i.e. informational signs, vacancies, rental information) to discreet yard signs less than 6 square feet in size. Construct signs in colors and material appropriate to the character of the area. These signs should be located inconspicuously within the bounds of the property they reference.

For areas that are determined to have historic significance rehabilitation efforts should follow the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. The *Standards* were developed by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior to address rehabilitation issues in a format that allows for their application to a wide variety of building types and styles while providing latitude for the replacement of extensively deteriorated, damaged or missing features using either traditional or substitute material.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation are as follows:

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other buildings, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that has acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color texture and where possible materials.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archaeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will become compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion and massing to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Multi-Family Residential Development

FOCUS recommends the Kansas City-style apartment as a model for new multi-family residential development. The Kansas City-styled apartment is generally three stories in height and constructed of brick. Built primarily between 1900 and 1939, they are characterized by a front colonnade and stacked porches that open to the street. (Urban Core Plan, p.33) Apartments of this style can be found along many boulevards and arterial streets, including some sections of Prospect Avenue, a Residential Great Street. FOCUS states that new multi-family residential infill on Great Streets will be of a compatible character with the older apartments and contain the positive characteristics described in the FOCUS Building Block, Quality Places to Live and Work. (Urban Core Plan, p.34)

Urban design guidelines affecting multi-family residential design are:

- A maximum density limit of 6-14 units per acre is required to maintain a compatible medium density with the existing neighborhood.
- Public open space of 20% of the site area is to be provided within the housing development. The open space may be a combination of a single area and smaller playgrounds associated with the unit layout pattern.
- An adequate buffer between the existing single family area and any new multi-family housing shall be provided with a 35' minimum depth from existing single-family lots to the rear yard of the multi-family unit.
- Back yards shall be provided for each unit at a minimum area of 400 square feet.
- Any development plan shall recognize the influence of the existing topography and incorporate the topography into the plan as a site feature.
- Housing unit entrances are to be oriented to a primary street front, either existing or new, with a visual separation between the garage entry and the front door.

Parking

Critical to the success of private development is the provision of adequate parking easily accessible for proposed uses. Parking lot design must then provide safe and

convenient areas for retail customers and institutional uses while contributing positively to the image and character of new development.

- Parking structures and parking lots should be designed to be compatible with the adjacent structures and streetscape.
- Wherever possible, vehicular entry and exit points for surface lots and structures should minimize conflicts with pedestrian circulation.
- Parking should adhere to Chapter 52 of the Code of General Ordinances, Regulating Parking Stations.

Surface Parking Lots

- Parking lots should be located behind a building or oriented toward the rear of the lot. Surface parking facilities should not be located on the corners of blocks.
- All surface parking lots located along street frontage areas are to be screened by using landscape, raised planters, ornamental low walls, or changes in elevation.
- Trees are to be provided within parking lots so that 12% of the surface area is devoted to green space. There should be one tree allowed for every three parking spaces provided. Trees are to be planted in medians large enough to support their growth and protect them from cars. Clustering/massing of trees is encouraged.
- Entries to parking lots are to be designed as recognizable points of entry with landscape features or other design elements.
- Lighting on parking lots is to be designed to be compatible with street lighting in light source and fixture character.
- Parking lots are to be designed as arrival points for the development.
- Paving diversity is encouraged, with asphalt used in areas that have the highest use and brick pavers to designate pedestrian, entry, or other special areas. Pedestrian paths should include a smooth area of wheelchair width to provide compatible surface for people with disabilities.
- Medians are to be designed with easy, barrier-free pedestrian access.
- Patterned paving material is encouraged to establish clear patterns for pedestrian and vehicular traffic.
- Parking lots and street designs should have the capacity to be shared by cars and pedestrians. Paving material changes should be used to indicate separation of pedestrian and vehicular paths.

Parking Structures

- The design of parking garage exteriors should visually respect and integrate with adjacent buildings and environment. Ramping systems should occur on the inside of the garage to avoid sloping floors at the perimeter.
- Parking structures that front on all streets should strive to achieve service retail or commercial space at street grade for a portion of their frontage on those streets.
- On any building wall facing a street or pedestrian corridor, the solid-to-void ratio of facade openings should not create horizontal banding.

- Pedestrian and vehicular entrances should be clearly defined with architectural features and appropriate signage.

Signage

The *FOCUS Urban Core Plan* recommends that signage be designed in accordance with the scale, color and articulation of the building. Proliferation of signage should be avoided, to prevent visual clutter.

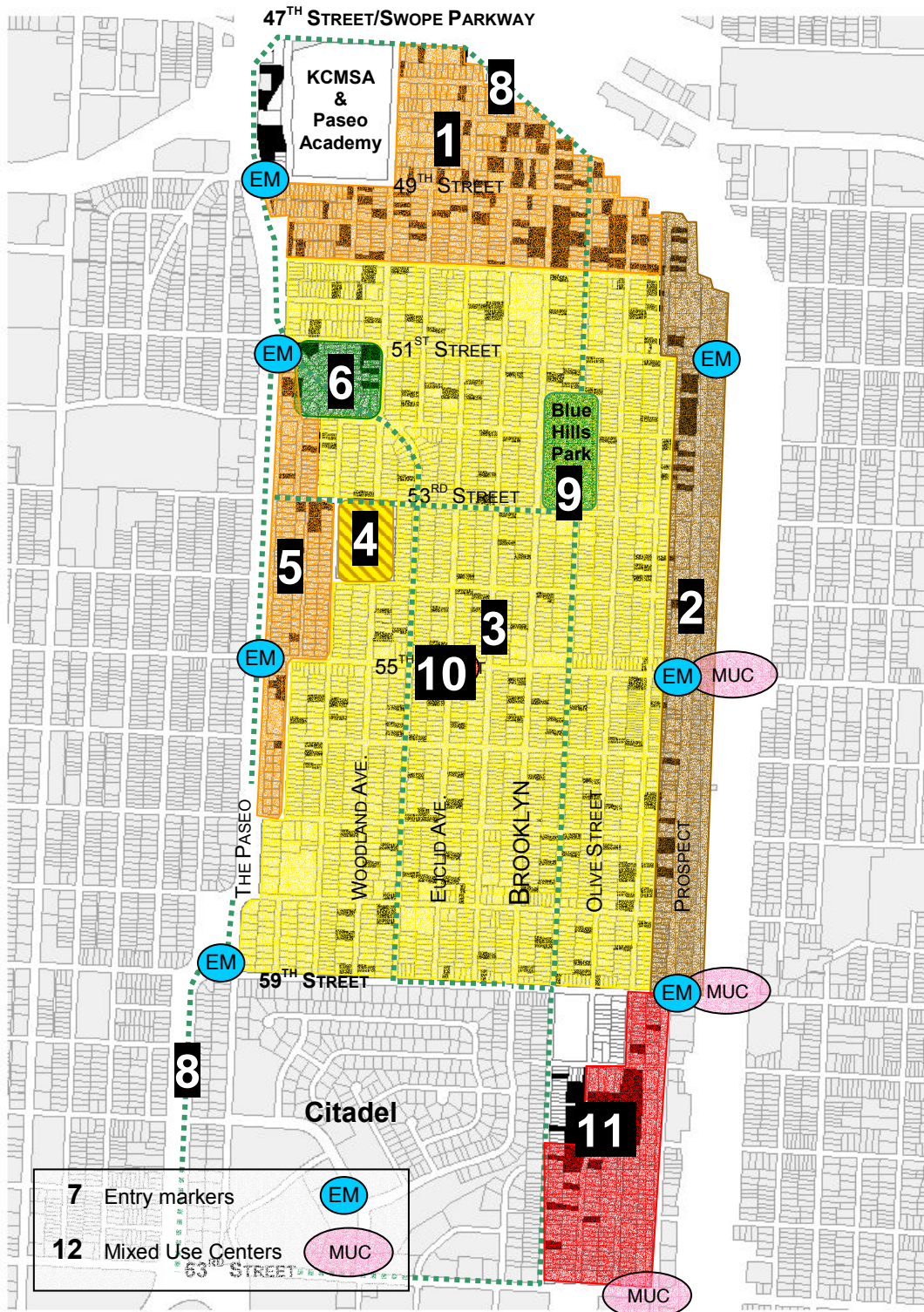
Specific Signage Guidelines


- Traffic control and street signage should be as required by the City of Kansas City. Signage design should be based on the compatibility within the overall area.
- All signage should be conceived as a complete signage and graphics system.
- Freestanding district identification may be appropriate in areas of the project where building setbacks and other site-specific conditions may warrant its use.
- Building signage is to be in proportion to the overall size and scale of storefront design. Informational or directional signs will be considered for residential areas and parking areas only.
- Commercial signs shall be limited to those mounted flat against the building wall or under canopies and shall be compatible with the architectural style of the building.
- No off site advertising signs are allowed.
- Sign area is limited to 5% of the building façade area.
- Any sign illumination shall be such that the light source is not visible at human eye level. Neon signs are allowed upon review by City staff.







PROTOTYPE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Twelve prototype development projects explored in the Options portion of the planning process have the potential to be a vehicle for combined public and private investment in Blue Hills that could bring Blue Hills stabilization efforts to completion. Five of the original sixteen options considered were addressed as public policy recommendations; the remaining eleven prototype development projects are shown on the map on the next page and detailed in the table following the map.

BLUE HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN ■ 4: PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS



#	Project Name	Type	Location		Land Use
1	Northeast Blue Hills	Market rate housing; rehab of existing housing	47 th Street/Swope Parkway to 50 th Street, The Paseo Boulevard to Wabash Avenue.		Low-density residential
2	Prospect Corridor	Med-density residential	49 th Street to 50 th Street, Wabash Avenue to Prospect Avenue		Medium density residential, with the exceptions of mixed-use nodes at 55 th , and from 59 th Street to the 63 rd Street Corridor
3	Central Blue Hills	Single-family, infill and rehab	49 th Street to 59 th Street, The Paseo Boulevard to Wabash Avenue		Low density residential
4	5300 Woodland	Single-family, infill	5300 Block of Highland Avenue to Woodland Avenue		Low density single-family residential
5	The Paseo Boulevard	Single-family, new and rehab; street alignment	51st to 57th Street along The Paseo Boulevard to Wayne/ Highland		Low-density residential, medium density residential
6	Brookwood Avenue	New Entry	Brookwood from Paseo to Michigan		N/A

#	Project Name	Type	Location		Land Use
7	Entry Markers	Identity, landscaping	Selected intersections along The Paseo and Prospect Avenue		N/A
8	Pedestrian Trail	Recreation, connection	47 th Street/Swope Parkway to 63 rd Street, along The Paseo Boulevard, Park Avenue, and Woodland Avenue		N/A
9	Blue Hills Park	Recreational amenities	Southern half of the 5100 block of Park Avenue to 53 rd Street, Brooklyn Avenue to on half block east of Park Avenue		Park and recreational
10	55 th & Euclid Retail	Rehab neighborhood retail	55 th Street, facing blocks on the north and south, from Michigan Avenue to Euclid Avenue		Commercial
11	TIF Project iGî	Mixed-Use, residential	59 th Street to 63 rd Street Corridor, Park Avenue to Prospect Avenue		Mixed-use
12	Prospect Mixed Use Centers	Mixed-Use	55 th , 59 th , and 63 rd Streets and Prospect Avenue		Mixed-use

SUMMARY

The plan recommendations address the role of public policy in guiding present and future development opportunities in the Blue Hills neighborhood.

The plan recommendations include policy recommendations by category, and a redevelopment framework that describes twelve prototype development projects, to illustrate urban design concepts as expression of the land use. Key public policy recommendations include:

1. Land use and zoning designations should be consistent with the residential character of Blue Hills.
2. Zoning patterns should reflect appropriate land use designations.
3. Retain the single-family nature of the Blue Hills neighborhood through continued development of quality housing.
4. Support the preservation of historic properties and encourage development and renovation that is respectful of historic character.
5. Create enhanced entrances into the Blue Hill neighborhood.
6. Increase the connectivity within the community through pedestrian/bicycle routes throughout Blue Hills.
7. Establish a program for the efficient repair and maintenance of catch basins.
8. Reinforce and stabilize Blue Hills Park.
9. Reinforce the secondary arterials and neighborhood streets as pedestrian friendly streets through traffic calming measures.
10. Support commercial development that is responsive to the needs and the character of the community.

These policy recommendations used in conjunction with the design guidelines provide a basis for future development that is compatible with the existing character of the neighborhood.

Twelve prototype development projects explored in the Options portion of the planning process have produced opportunities for combined public and private investment. The proposed projects and land uses are:

Project	Land Use
Northeast Blue Hills	Low density residential
Prospect Corridor	Medium density residential
Central Blue Hills	Low density residential
5300 Woodland	Low density residential,
The Paseo Boulevard	Low density residential, Medium density residential
Brookwood Avenue	Not applicable
Entry Markers	Not applicable
Pedestrian Trail	Not applicable
Blue Hills Park	Park and recreation, Low density residential
55 th and Euclid Avenue	Commercial
TIF Project iGî	Mixed-use
Prospect Mixed Use Center	Mixed-use

